



ilian elderly
y a handful
police

ANIA (AFP) — An
year-old Sicilian
nan who was caught
ng to steal church relics
nished police by vio-
ly wielding a copper
p as she tried to resis-
st, police said
dnesday. Far from com-
quently, the elderly lady
ected to the attitude of
police officers, who she
ed had not treated her
due respect for her
s. The struggle contin-
ed at the police station in
ania, Sicily, as she
ed objects at officers
il her daughter arrived
take her home.

sonardo as a
rial killer in
merican Psycho

OS ANGELES (AP) —
sonardo DiCaprio is the
serial killer in the
American Psycho. The
Titanic star in search of
encore and the indepen-
ent studio Lions Gate
films couldn't agree on a
aring date, the Los
ngeles Times and the
ew York Daily News
ported Tuesday, citing
identified sources.
DiCaprio's spokeswoman
indy Guagenti, said only
at the actor is schedu-
to begin filming "The
leach" in January.

Priscilla wins
\$75,000 in a
defamation lawsuit

SANTA MONICA (AP) —
Priscilla Presley won
\$75,000 in a defamation
lawsuit against a man who
claimed she had an affair
before she married Elton
Presley. Superior Court
Judge Daniel A. Camp
ruled Aug. 12 that Lamar
Currie Grant, a former
Army buddy of Presley's,
made false statements he
were repeated and used
the source for the book
"Child Bride: The Untold
Story of Priscilla Beaulieu
Presley" by Suzanne
Finstad. Presley has long
assured the world she was
a virgin when she mar-
ried the King.

Obituary and
photo resembles
job ad

BUCHAREST (AP) — Is
some it might appear in-
tasteful, but to Oluf
Medar's colleagues it is
the perfect way to pay re-
ute to a former adver-
executive killed in a car
accident. "Coffee, called
telephone, cigarette,
clients, money, dream
fast, fast, too fast. And it
is no longer," read the
word obituary, which
appeared Tuesday in a
widely read daily.
Evenimentul Zilei. At a
glance, the obituary's
photo look like a job ad
a local advertising com-
ny.

'Dead People
Server' keeps
on who's cold

MOUNT LEBANON (AP) —
Wondering if a cer-
famous celebrity is
among us? How do
Sally Struthers or Rick
Montalban? To tell you
morbidly curious, a
ben Pittsburgh woman
keeping tabs on who's
— and who's just dead —
Hollywood — on her
site, the Dead Peo-
Server. "It's informa-
and amusing," said
Mann, 41, who main-
the site, said Monday.
you don't see some-
ularly, suddenly they're
of sight, out of mind,
you're like, 'Gee, what
did happen to
Humbley?'

King receives Rifai

WASHINGTON (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Friday received Speaker of the Upper House of Parliament Zeid Rifai who conveyed to him the senators' greetings and their wishes for a speedy recovery and a safe return home. Rifai listened to King Hussein's directives regarding the meetings of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which will be held in South Africa. King Hussein asked Rifai to convey his greetings to South African President Nelson Mandela.

Jordan Times

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Upon King's directives PM: Senators appointed in Cabinet should resign from Upper House

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh said Friday that ministers, who are at the same time members of the Senate, should resign from the Upper House of Parliament to ensure the principle of separation between the executive and the legislative.

In an interview with Jordan Television, Tarawneh said His Majesty King Hussein stressed the need of separation among the branches of government when he entrusted the prime minister to form the government.

"We view Parliament as consisting of two parts: the Lower House, which is elected by the citizens, and the Upper House of Parliament whose members are appointed by the King.

Both Houses form the legislative authority," said Tarawneh.

He said that after taking King Hussein's approval on the principle of separation of authorities, "all those senators who were appointed as ministers will submit their resignations from the Upper House of Parliament."

Accordingly, four senators are expected to resign. They are Taher Kanaan, minister of state for development affairs; Jawdat Shoul, minister of justice; Tawfiq Khreishan, minister of municipal and rural affairs and the environment and Nayef Al Qadi, minister of interior.

Tarawneh added that his government will submit its policy statement to the Lower House of Parliament

to win a vote of confidence.

The prime minister said that he will meet today (Saturday) with the Lower House Speaker Sa'd Hayel Srou and in order to agree on a mechanism of maintaining contact and close cooperation with the Lower House's committees and blocs.

Tarawneh said: "We are seeking the Parliament's advice and opinion on various issues and work in a team spirit."

The separation of powers is a new concept advocated by the King in the past two years.

Reports in the Arab press after the formation of Tarawneh's government spoke of the discontent at the Lower House because the government included senators but no deputies.

At least one deputy, Basam Hadadin, wrote a column in one daily protesting deputies' exclusion from the Cabinet.

Deputies also protested that the House was not consulted before the makeup of the Cabinet.

In reply to a question on the Lockerbie case and how he views Jordan's role regarding this issue, Tarawneh said that King Hussein does not believe in imposing sanctions against the people.

He said that King Hussein made contacts with Libyan leaders to help arrive at a settlement.

"King Hussein personally talked with U.S. President Bill Clinton and other U.S. officials as well as British Prime Minister Tony Blair and exchanged messages

with them to reach a settlement on this issue," said Tarawneh.

He added that King Hussein spared no effort and supported the Libyan proposal which was later adopted by the Arab League, the Council of Arab Foreign Ministers and the Organisation of Islamic Conference.

"This settlement was in response to King Hussein's advice and the impetus he gave to American, British and Libyan initiatives," said Tarawneh.

The prime minister met with His Majesty the King last week in the U.S. capital, Washington, Tarawneh said that King Hussein enjoys good health and high morale, and he is

(Continued on page 7)



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, walks into the Palace of Justice before a meeting with members of the Judicial Council on Thursday (Photo by Boghos)

Regent: Judiciary should be protected from pressure, influence or interference

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, said Thursday that court judges should be protected from pressure, influence or interference in their work so as to guarantee the independence, neutrality and integrity of the judicial system.

Speaking during a meeting with judges from the Higher Court of Justice and Cassation as well as the Judicial Council, the Regent said that the independence of the judiciary is not an academic matter but rather it is "a scientific question" which can best be expressed through judges' practice.

The Regent emphasized that the independence of the judiciary, which is entrusted with protecting people's rights and freedoms and ensuring justice, strengthens the concept of the state of law and reflects the country's cultural achievements.

The judicial system, the Regent added, is very close to society and assumes political and social dimensions far exceeding the legal dimension.

At the meeting held at the Palace of Justice, Prince Hassan said that in an age marked by changes and developments, an independent, integral, well established and unbiased judicial system guarantees protection of people's rights.

Calling for comprehensive efforts to develop and modernize the judicial system, Prince Hassan said to achieve this, judges should be well trained and their qualifications upgraded, legislative reforms should be introduced, information should be made available so that the judges can keep pace with developments and an appropriate atmosphere should be created for the judges enabling them to enrich their knowledge and become specialized in their respective line of work.

Emphasizing the need for the judiciary to maintain co-operation and integration with the state's administrative and security services, the Regent said that independence of the judiciary does not mean isolation or introversion, but rather positive interaction to serve public interest.

Prince Hassan expressed appreciation of the Judicial Council's work which, he said, is designed to develop Jordan's judicial system, adding that the council holds absolute power in organizing judicial affairs.

Head of the Judicial Council and President of the Court of Cassation Taher Hikmat pledged that the Jordanian judiciary will remain free and independent, acting towards ensuring justice and the rule of law.

Hikmat outlined the Judicial Council's efforts to develop the work and capabilities of the judicial system to enable it to cater to the requirements of modern society.

According to Hikmat, the process of developing the judicial system is underway and the Ministry of Justice has embarked on measures designed to enable the Jordanian judiciary face the challenges of the coming decade.

Present at the meeting was Minister of Justice Jawdat Shoul and senior officials from the Ministry of Justice.

Saying it is not bound by U.K.-Netherlands accord Libya calls for negotiations on Lockerbie trial

TUNIS (R) — The Libyan government on Friday called on the U.S., Britain and the Netherlands to enter into negotiations on judicial procedures for the trial in the Netherlands of two Libyan suspects in the Lockerbie bombing.

Libya's Foreign Ministry, in a strongly critical comment on a U.N. Security Council resolution adopted on Thursday backing the U.S.-British plan for the trial, said it was not committed by the agreement between Britain and the Netherlands attached to the resolution.

"We call on the concerned parties, the U.S., Britain and the Netherlands, to negotiate with it [Libya] as soon as possible to find the appropriate ways to implement the initiative far from tricks and the language of threat," the ministry said in a statement read on Libya state-run television monitored in Tunis.

"While the Jamahiriyyah [Libya] announces it accepts what came in the resolution on the trial of the two suspects in Holland...[it calls] for negotiations on the arrangements and the necessary guarantees for the two suspects, directly or through the U.N. secretary general or any other party agreed on," the statement said.

The U.N. Security Council late on Thursday unanimously endorsed the plan for a trial in the Netherlands of the two Libyan suspects in the 1988 mid-air bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland.

Britain on Friday refused to respond to the Libyan call for negotiations, saying the Tripoli government had to communicate through the U.N. and not the media.

The U.S. and Britain insist that the Lockerbie trial plan is not negotiable. "We are awaiting a formal response through the U.N. secretary general," a British Foreign Office spokesman said. There could be no negotiations on the proposal, which he said Libya could "take or leave." Britain was, however, prepared to clarify legal and technical points.

Libya's U.N. ambassador told the council on Thursday that his country accepted the plan.

The council resolution also calls for sanctions in force against Libya since 1992 to be suspended as soon as the two alleged intelligence agents arrive in the Netherlands. But Libya wants the sanctions to be lifted as soon as an accord is signed on the transfer of the two suspects rather than after their arrival in Holland.

The U.N. sanctions, including an air and arms embargo, were imposed by the Security Council because of Libya's refusal to extradite the wanted men to Britain or the U.S., where they have been indicted for their role in the bombing, which killed 270 people, including all 259 aboard the airliner and 11 on the ground.

"[Libya] considers itself as not bound by the provisions of the agreement concluded between the United Kingdom



United Kingdom's Deputy Ambassador to the United Nations Stephen Gomersall, left, United States Deputy Ambassador to the U.N. Peter Burleigh, centre, and Bahrain Ambassador to the U.N. Mohammad Buallay, vote on a Security Council resolution at the U.N. headquarters Thursday night, to suspend sanctions against Libya once it hands over two intelligence agents for trial in the Netherlands. The resolution, approved 15-0, also threatens additional measures against Libya if the suspects fail to appear for trial before a panel of three Scottish judges under Scottish law (AP photo)

Holland annexed to the resolution, to which the Jamahiriyyah was not a party," the Libyan Foreign Ministry said.

Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi told CNN in an interview on Thursday that he wanted clear arrangements and guarantees before handing over the two suspects. "If Britain and America wish to have a solution there should be no hidden tricks...they should not make it difficult for Libya to accept," he said.

The Libyan statement dismissed the council's resolution for accusing Tripoli of not doing enough to condemn

"terrorism" and for ignoring its cooperation with Britain on the IRA and with France on the UTA bombing.

"The annexes attached to the resolution and the conditions, threats and brandishing the tightening of sanctions...and ignoring the efforts it [Libya] has exerted represent a plot to abort this solution and find an excuse to upgrade the sanctions against Libya and its people," the statement said.

The resolution said Libya has to satisfy the French authorities investigating the mid-flight bombing of France's UTA Flight 772 over Niger in 1989 in which 171

people died.

"We are astonished by this...for this judicial cooperation has already been effected since 1996 and the French investigating magistrate expressed its satisfaction at this full and positive cooperation in an official letter distributed to the Security Council on Nov. 6, 1997," the Libyan statement said.

The European Union on Friday praised Britain and the U.S. for accepting a trial before a Scottish court under Scottish law. It also welcomed the Libyan announcement that it would deal positively with the U.S. and British proposal.

'Netanyahu may delay new settlement in east Jerusalem' Israel lifts Hebron siege

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu may block construction of a new Jewish quarter in Arab east Jerusalem despite final approval for the project by city officials, his spokesman said Friday.

The announcement Thursday that Israeli authorities in Jerusalem had given the final go-ahead for building a 132-unit Jewish settlement in the Arab quarter of Ras Al Amud drew sharp protests from the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and a complaint to the United Nations.

But Netanyahu's office said the prime minister reserved the right to delay construction if he deter-

mines it was not in the best interests of Israel.

"The government will decide about construction in this area. It will examine the issue at the appropriate time," said Netanyahu's spokesman, Aviv Bushinsky.

Israel's attorney general ruled last year that the prime minister could prevent construction projects if they could "disturb public order."

He retains this power even if the construction scheme, like that at Ras Al Amud, has obtained all the necessary permits.

Netanyahu has already used the prerogative to hold

Israel LIFTED its week-long closure of Hebron on Friday, allowing residents in Palestinian-ruled areas of the city to travel elsewhere in the West Bank, the Israeli army said.

The volatile town had been sealed off from the rest of the West Bank since last Friday while Israeli troops searched for a suspected Palestinian assailant who stabbed a Jewish settler to death and set fire to his home.

"The Israeli army lifted overnight the closure of Hebron and is at this point allowing Palestinians to come and go from the [Palestinian-ruled areas of the] city," an Israeli army spokeswoman said.

Meanwhile, a Palestinian man and woman were wounded by rubber-coated metal bullets Friday during clashes between stone-throwing youths and Israeli soldiers around the Jewish settlement enclave in Hebron, hospital officials said.

Dozens of youths pelted the soldiers with stones and empty bottles in the warren of alleyways surrounding the settlement area, witnesses said.

Israeli soldiers responded with rubber-coated anti-riot bullets, wounding a man and a woman who were passing by but were not involved in the fighting, they said.

The two were treated at the city's Alia Hospital where doctors described their wounds as light.

According to an opinion poll published Friday, a slim majority of Israelis think the small number of radical Jewish settlers living in isolated enclaves in Hebron should be removed from the West Bank city of 120,000.

Fifty-two per cent of those questioned said the settlements should be removed while 43 per cent want them left in place and five per cent had no opinion.

The poll was conducted among 500 adult Israelis and had a margin of error of 4.5 per cent.

Agencies

18 hurt in Tel Aviv bombing

TEL AVIV (R) — A bomb exploded in the heart of Tel Aviv on Thursday, injuring at least 18 people on a busy street near the city's main synagogue, and police said they believed Arab militants were behind the attack.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reacted to the bombing by demanding the Palestinian National Authority, in charge of self-rule areas in the West Bank and Gaza, take steps to "fight terrorism."

"It was terrorist attack," national police chief Yehuda Vilks told army radio. Israeli security officials use the term to describe attacks by Arabs.

Vilks said the explosion occurred at 8:40 a.m. (local time) in a trash bin during the morning rush hour near the Great Synagogue on Allenby Street, a main thoroughfare in the city's commercial district.

"It was not a large bomb, no more than several hundred grammes of explosives," Tel Aviv police chief Shlomo Avnishi said about the device that was also packed with nails.

On Wednesday, the leader of the fundamentalist Muslim Hamas movement, Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, said at a rally in Gaza that the group would attack Israel in retaliation for the U.S.

cruise missile strikes last week on Sudan and Afghanistan.

Asked about the bomb blast on Thursday, he told Reuters: "We don't know who carried it out. Maybe they were Jewish extremists who want to push Jews to more extremism." But Yassin said the Palestinians had a right "to attack any place in Israel as a response to Israeli and American behaviour in general."

Netanyahu, speaking to reporters in Jerusalem, repeated his bedrock demand that Palestinian President Yasser Arafat's administration crack down on Muslim militants as a condition for moving forward in peace-making.

"We must deal with [terrorism] aggressively, as we have been doing," Netanyahu said. "We also demand the Palestinian National Authority fight terrorism."

Hospital officials said at least 18 people were wounded, one of them, a woman, seriously. A 17-month-old baby was among those hurt.

"I saw a woman whose leg had been blown off," a witness told army radio.

Since the U.S. strikes a week ago against what Washington called terrorist bases in Afghanistan and an alleged chemical weapons facility in Sudan, Israel has been on heightened alert for

possible attacks in its major cities. A police spokeswoman said after Thursday's explosion that more police would patrol public places in Tel Aviv and roadblocks would be set up around the city.

Asked by reporters in Gaza about the Tel Aviv bomb, Arafat declined to comment. But Palestinian peace negotiator Hassan Asfour cautioned the Israeli government against premature finger-pointing. "It is not unusual for Netanyahu's government to blame everything on Palestinians and the Arab World to hide its failure in the peace process," Asfour said.

Suicide bombers have struck several times in Tel Aviv since Israel and the Palestinians signed their first interim peace deal in 1993. But some security officials had predicted that Palestinian groups would shift to smaller charges planted on city streets because such bombs were easier to smuggle past Israeli checkpoints.

The blast on Thursday, which also damaged shops and vehicles, was the first such attack in Tel Aviv since a suicide bomber killed himself and three women in a cafe in March 1997.

'Israeli army uncovers Palestinian terror cell'

TEL AVIV (AP) — The Israeli army said Thursday that it has uncovered an organized Palestinian cell operating out of the West Bank but headquartered in Syria and with training bases in Lebanon.

A statement from the army said they have arrested some 20 members of the cell which is part of a larger organization based in Damascus, Syria called Abu Musa Faction — a group which split in 1983 from Palestinian President Yasser

Arafat's Fateh party.

The army said most of the arrests were made in villages surrounding the West Bank city of Hebron.

"Some of those arrested were drafted into the organization while studying at colleges in the former Soviet Union," the army statement said.

Israel named the leader of the West Bank operation as Adnan Fafis, a 32-year-old Palestinian believed to be hiding out in the Palestinian-controlled sector of Hebron.

The army said Fafis has been on Israel's wanted list since the early 1997.

"Orders for the group came directly from its headquarters in Syria and large sums of money from Syria were transferred for the purpose of military-style training," the army statement said.

The army said members of the cell have confessed to two drive-by shootings on Israeli vehicles in April and May and throwing a hand grenade at an Israeli car in June.

Mubarak fears more bombs after Tel Aviv explosion

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said he expected more bombings similar to an explosion in Tel Aviv Thursday, which wounded 21 people, so long as the Israeli government is "hostile to peace."

"The explosion Thursday in Tel Aviv is the logical result of the trampling of the peace process in the Middle East since the coming to power of the Likud government [Prime Minister] Benjamin Netanyahu," Mubarak said in a statement to the Egyptian government daily Al Gomhuriya due to appear Friday.

"Such explosions will be repeated and bring the death of innocent victims as long as the Tel Aviv government continues to adopt positions hostile to the peace and so long as Palestinian land is not returned to its owners," he said.

He also said he feared "the explosions will spread to other parts of the world."

Earlier Thursday, Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Mousa said that relaunching the Israeli-Arab peace process is the best guarantee for security in the Middle East.

"One must take into account the growing disappointment in the Middle East" due to the stagnation of the peace process, Mousa told journalists here when asked for his reaction to the explosion.

"Assuring a real progress in the peace constitutes the only true guarantee for security and a stable life," Mousa said.

The bomb explosion was the first in Israel in a year.

'Attacks on Lebanon will not benefit Israel'

BEIRUT (AP) — Lebanon warned Israel Thursday that if it bombs Lebanese infrastructure in retaliation for guerrilla rocket attacks, it will destroy the 1996 understanding on the border conflict and provoke further violence.

Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Bouez issued the warning two days after guerrillas of the Iranian-backed Hizbollah group fired Katyusha rockets into northern Israel that wounded 19 people.

The rocket attack came hours after Israeli helicopter gunships killed a commander of the rival Amal guerrilla group Tuesday and Israeli artillery shells wounded six civilians in southern Lebanon.

While Israel normally retaliates heavily for Katyusha attacks on its northern settlements, on Tuesday night it responded with only artillery shells.

But at a meeting of Israel's security cabinet on Wednesday, a majority of ministers said that the next time rockets land in northern Israel, the air force should attack Lebanese bridges, power stations and main roads, the Israeli newspaper Maariv reported Thursday.

Such strikes might force the Lebanese government to take action against Hizbollah and Amal, the ministers reportedly argued.

Asked to comment on the Israeli reports Thursday, Bouez told reporters that Lebanon was committed to the April 1996 understanding that prohibits attacks on civilians in the conflict between

Israel and the Lebanese guerrillas.

"But if Israel wants to destroy this agreement, it can do so and it must bear the consequences," Bouez said.

"Aggression has always, and will again, end in failure. This situation will not benefit Israel," he added.

The understanding was reached after Israeli troops launched a 16-day incursion into southern Lebanon with the aim of wiping out the Katyusha capability of the guerrillas. At least 175 Lebanese people were killed during the offensive.

Bouez said that Lebanon was in contact with the major powers "who must bear their responsibility and try to put an end to Israeli actions."

The United States and France are represented on the five-nation panel that monitors adherence to the 1996 understanding. The other members are Israel, Syria and Lebanon.

Hizbollah has warned of more rocket attacks. "While we reaffirm our keenness to abide by the contents of the April understanding, we warn this arrogant enemy against resuming any kind of aggression on our people," Hizbollah said in a statement Tuesday night.

Meanwhile, Moscow on Thursday urged the Lebanese and Israeli sides to exercise "self-restraint," respect the April accord and not allow the escalation in south Lebanon to degenerate into "a full-scale military confrontation," Lebanon's official National News Agency reported.



ACTIVISTS DRAGGED AWAY FROM DEMO: Chained to each other, Greenpeace activists are dragged away Friday by Turkish policemen as they demonstrate against the country's nuclear plans in front of the energy ministry in Ankara. Activists demanded Turkey drop its plans for nuclear energy, calling instead for investment in solar energy. Activists entered the building and hung a huge 'No Nukes' banner on top of the fourteen-storey building (Reuters photo)

Mordechai visit aims to boost Israel-China ties

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai visits China with top executives from Israel's main weapons manufacturers next week on an official visit aimed at bolstering defence ties with Beijing.

The trip, delayed by a day due to security problems at home, takes place against a backdrop of what security sources called a five-year decline in secret bilateral arms deals.

The defence ministry said Mordechai would spend four days in China starting on Monday as the guest of National Defence Minister Chi Haotian. He will visit military bases and defence industries and was also expected to meet other top officials.

"The defence minister will discuss with his hosts and interlocutors in China the situation in the Middle East, the peace process and ways to strengthen security and other ties between the two countries," Mordechai's media adviser said.

Israel and China established diplomatic ties in 1992 but Israeli military sales to Beijing,

which have drawn U.S. criticism and prompted allegations of illegal technology transfers by Israel, date back nearly 20 years.

Several multi-year contracts with China during the 1980s, mainly for tank and aircraft upgrades, injected billions of dollars into ailing Israeli defence industries. Both countries refuse to disclose details of their arms deals.

But most of the orders were filled by 1993. Since then Israeli military sales to China have dropped to less than \$50 million a year, according to one security official who refused to be identified. Overall bilateral trade hovers at around \$300 million.

One deal still under negotiation involves a Russian transport plane which Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI) has agreed to convert into a "Phalcon" surveillance aircraft for China with advanced radar and computer systems.

China has ordered one Phalcon for \$250 million but might purchase three more if the first one meets its needs, security

officials said. IAI Director Moshe Keret is among nine defence industry executives accompanying Mordechai.

China's military arsenal is based mainly on hardware from what was the Soviet Union and Beijing has looked to Israel for the technology to improve existing weapons or manufacture its own.

"No other country has accumulated as much experience in fighting Soviet weapons, upgrading them and integrating them into its own arsenal as Israel," said political scientist Yitzhak Shichor of Jerusalem's Hebrew University.

Another factor has been Israel's determination to see the deals through, even when the U.S. and other countries halted arms sales over China's 1989 massacre at Tiananmen Square.

"We supplied the goods even when the political situation deteriorated. Other countries turned and ran as a result of the events at Tiananmen but we stuck to our commitments. And that created a trust between the two countries," said the security official.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hamas militants burn American flags

NABLUS (AP) — Palestinian militants burned American flags Thursday and called on Saudi dissident Osama Ben Laden, suspected of being behind the East Africa embassy bombings, to attack Israel and the U.S. Some 400 people participated in the rally, where groups of masked men burned three American and then three Israeli flags. In the West Bank town of Nablus, a leader of the Islamic Hamas group, which opposes peace with Israel, called the strikes an attack on Muslims and Arabs. "America is the first terror state in the world, America is an enemy of Arab and Islamic people," Jamal Salim said.

Sudan floods displace 70,000 people

KHARTOUM (R) — Some 70,000 people have been displaced and 67 villages destroyed by flooding of the Nile in northern Sudan, the state-owned Al Anba newspaper reported on Friday. It said total losses were estimated at more than 15 billion Sudanese pounds (\$7 million). The Commissioner of Humanitarian Aid, Hussein Al Obied, was quoted as saying emergency tents and food would be sent to the flood victims.

Turk general gets highest honour

ANKARA (R) — Turkey awarded its outgoing chief of general staff Ismail Hakkı Karadayı, who spearheaded an assault on Islamic activism, its highest decoration on Friday. Prime Minister Mesut Yılmaz's secularist government gave Karadayı the State Medal of Honour for "exemplary self-sacrifice, success and benefit to the peace and unity of society," the citation read. It was the first time an army chief had received the country's highest order. Karadayı led the fight against the perceived threat of Islamist activism forcing the resignation of the country's first Islamist prime minister, Necmettin Erbakan, in June last year, bringing Yılmaz's secularist coalition to power. "We will continue to monitor the comprehensive, organised and foreign-supported fundamentalist threat directed towards our integrity," Karadayı said as he handed over office to his successor as armed forces chief, Huseyin Kivrikoglu.

Qadhafi meets with Iranian envoy

TRIPOLI (AFP) — Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi met Thursday with an Iranian envoy who handed him a message from Iranian President Mohammad Khatami. Libya's official JANA news agency reported. Mohammad-Reza Nouri Shahrudi, accompanied by two sons of former Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, came to "present best wishes to Colonel Qadhafi," as he recovers from a hip operation in July, the agency said. Iran's official IRNA news agency said that Khatami's message expressed best wishes on the 29th anniversary of the Libyan revolution which brought Qadhafi to power.

Israel says no request to arrest father of U.S. murder suspect

TEL AVIV (AP) — The justice ministry has not received a request from the United States to arrest the father of an American suspect in a murder case, who allegedly helped his son flee to Israel, a spokeswoman said Friday.

Sol Sheinbein is staying in Israel with his son, Samuel, who police say murdered an acquaintance in Maryland and then left the country to escape

charges.

Sasmeel Sheinbein fled two days after the charged and dismembered body of Alfredo Enrique Tello Jr. was discovered in a garage near the Sheinbein home on Sept. 19 last year.

He was arrested by Israeli police upon his arrival in the country and an Israeli district court is slated to rule by Sept. 1 on a request from the United

States for his extradition.

The father was charged by prosecutors in the case this week with obstruction of justice for allegedly providing the airplane ticket and financial support to send his son to Israel.

Prosecutors said Thursday that they had contacted the Sheinbein family lawyers about the arrest warrant of the father for the misdemeanor charge.

But justice ministry spokeswoman Ery Eshed said Israel had yet to receive any formal or informal request from the United States regarding the father's arrest.

The family has insisted that Sheinbein has Israeli citizenship through his father and thus cannot be extradited to the United States under Israeli law.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 4773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:10 Cartoon — Postman Pat
15:30 Clowns Around
16:00 Drama — Neighbours
16:30 Doc. — Scandi Nature
17:00 French Programme — "Faut Pas Revenir"
18:00 Acapulco Bay
19:00 Le Journal
19:15 French Programme — "L'été de Colomb"
19:30 News headlines
19:35 Quiz Show — You Bet Your Life
19:55 Cinema, Cinema
20:30 Drama — Prim
21:10 Drama — Sirens
22:00 News in English
22:30 Feature film — "The Substitute"
23:59 Country Music
00:30 End of T.X.

PRAYER TIMES

04:42 Fajr
06:03 Sunrise/Duha
12:37 Dhahir
16:13 Asr
19:10 Maghreb
20:31 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweifeh, Tel. 5920740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.
4632785

St. Joseph Church Tel.

4624590

Terra Sancta Church Tel.

4622366

Anglican Church Tel.

4624853/4624811

St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox Church Tel.

4771751

Amman International Church Tel.

5865897

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel.

5683404

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel.

5811295

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel.

4654932

St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel.

5661757

Church of the Annunciation Tel.

4637440

Greek Orthodox Church Tel.

4646138

Church of Presentation, Sweifeh Tel.

5920146

The United Catholic Church Tel.

4624757

The English-Language Catholic Parish Tel.

4614190

Evangelical Free Church Tel.

4892679

The Baptist Church Tel.

4628052

The Armenian Catholic Church Tel.

4771331

The Armenian Orthodox Church Tel.

4773261

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Normal summer to hot weather conditions will prevail with temperatures northwesterly moderate to active. In Amman, it will be hot, winds northerly moderate, and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.

Amman 20/34
Aqaba 27/39
Deserts 19/38
Jordan Valley 25/38

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 32 Aqaba 39, Humidity readings: Amman 42 per cent, Aqaba 37 per cent

Following are the highest temperatures expected today in the following areas:

Ajloun 29
Jerash 35
Um Qays 36
Madaba 36
Petra 37
Dead Sea 42

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Adif Shaker 4898863

Dr. Hanna Mansour 4750197

Dr. Sa'ad Tawfik

4782285

Dr. Nidal Dahleh

5627195

Firas pharmacy

5661912

Al Asema pharmacy

4637055

Nairokh pharmacy

4623672

Al Salam pharmacy

4636731

Yacoub pharmacy

4644945

Shmeisani pharmacy

4637660

Najih pharmacy

53477632

IRBID:

Dr. Ali Shagari 710069

Al Quds pharmacy

1-1

ZARQA:

Dr. Ra'ib Atallah 994424

Khalifeh pharmacy

985417

REPAIRS

Abdali Tel. Repairs 4623111

Jordan Television 4773111

Radio Jordan 4774111

Water Authority 5681101

J. Electricity Authority 5815615

Electric Power Co 4636381

RJ Flight Information 44-53201

Queen Alia Int. Airport 44-53200

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 4637111

Civil Defence Department 5661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 4630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192 4621111 4637777

Fire Brigade 4617101

Blood Bank 4775121

Highway Police 5343402

Traffic Police 4896390

Public Security Dept. 4630321

Hotel Complaints 5605800

Price Complaints 5661176

Water & Sewage Complaints 467467

Amman Municipality Complaints 7871111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 5921199

The Islamic Al-Hdi 5664317

Hussein Medical Centre Tel. 5856836

Luzma 4630195

Khalidi Maternity 4644281/6

Akileh Maternity 4642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362

Malhas, J. Amman 4636140

Palestine, Shmeisani 5607071

Shmeisani Hospital 5669131

University Hospital 5353444

Al-Muasher Hospital 5667227/3

Al-Ahli, Abdali 5664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajreen 4777111/3

Al-Bashir 4775111/26

Army, Marka 891611/5

Queen Alia Hospital 5602240/50

Amal Hospital 5674155

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital

109983323

Zarqa National Hospital

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital

102127555

Greek Catholic Hospital

102127275

Jordanians killed in Saudi road accident laid to rest

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The bodies of two Jordanians killed in a road accident in Saudi Arabia last week were laid to rest Friday in their hometown of Irbid.

Mahmoud Qwasmeh, 50, and his 17-year-old daughter Wafa were killed when their car overturned Wednesday near the Saudi Arabian city of Hafr Al Batin while they were returning to the United Arab Emirates from Jordan, where they spent their summer vacation.

Qwasmeh's wife, Sabah Salim Lobani, 40, and their three children Hamad, 11, Bashar, 12, and Ahmad, seven, were injured in the accident and were taken to Dhahran City for emergency treatment.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, ordered that a plane be sent to Saudi Arabia to carry the bodies of the deceased and the injured to Jordan.

On arrival in Amman late Thursday, the injured were taken to Al Hussein Medical Centre for further treatment. They were reported to be in fair and stable condition, according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.



PRINCESS BASMA PRESIDES OVER MEETING: HRH Princess Basma on Thursday presides over a meeting of the higher council of Jordanian women's committees. At the meeting, held in North Hashemi, Princess Basma stressed the need for interaction between the members of the committees with other Jordanian official and popular groups throughout the Kingdom to strengthen the role of women and their participation in public life (Petra photo)

Short-term plan needed to deal with poverty, unemployment — minister

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Social Development will soon introduce a short-term plan to deal with the problems of poverty and unemployment and will abandon earlier ideas of executing medium- and long-term schemes to deal with these issues, Minister of Social Development Mohammad Mamser said Friday.

He told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the short-term plan is urgently needed and the government cannot take up to 10 years to tackle chronic issues, as was envisioned earlier.

Describing the present mechanism of providing assistance to needy groups as "inefficient" and "unorganised" due to lack of coordination among aid institutions, Mamser said his ministry will introduce legislation for organising the assistance distribution process.

The ministry has found that retired government and armed forces personnel cannot support their dependants due to their low pensions, said Mamser, adding that measures are being taken to provide them with cash assistance or appropriate occupations.

The minister also called for a national strategy to deal with the issue of non-Jordanians working in the Kingdom. He said the problem of the estimated 300,000 jobless Jordanians could not be solved while 500,000 non-Jordanians are employed in the country.

Mamser said regulations setting a minimum wage are needed to help replace guest workers with Jordanians.

The ministry now pays up to JD82 a month to families at or below the poverty line through the National Aid Fund (NAF) while at the same time providing long-term loans to heads of families through the Queen Alia Fund, the NAF and the Employment and Development Fund, he said. The ministry last year spent a total of JD140 million in social assistance programmes benefiting a total of 65,000 needy families, the minister added.

'Double standards' on rights instrument's application comes under fire at seminar

By Alia Shukri Hamzeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Human rights advocates Thursday turned the focus of a seminar on human rights in Jordan to a criticism of the implementation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the need for signatories to move away from "double standards" policies.

"Despite the fact that the international community has shown a far more responsible role in ensuring human rights, in reaching a wider consensus on its laws, and in putting them in perspective through new improvised mechanisms, it has so far failed in achieving a fair and just implementation of those rights for millions of victims of war, natural disasters, and fatal illnesses around the world," said lawyer and human rights advocate Asma Khader.

At a seminar on human rights in Jordan held at the Institute of Diplomacy (ID) and chaired by its President Kamel Abu Jaber, Khader said the international community is facing the threat of falling into the grip of certain economic powers that have so far managed to distort the true meaning of freedom and democracy and transform it into tools to serve their own interests.

"Resorting to double standards in implementing international law and carrying out military action is rather evident," Sharif added, citing the United States' "selective" implementation of the declaration on certain countries like China, Iraq and recently Sudan.

For the director of the Palestinian Affairs Department at the Foreign Ministry, Ibrahim Badran, the consolidation of the human rights movement faces major political obstacles.

Badran, like his co-participants, referred to the "double standards policies" of the U.N. in implementing its conventions and resolutions.

"For instance," said Badran, "human rights in the region are still being abused by Israel and other countries, which in turn reflects badly on the credibility of human rights conventions and movements."

Providing a United Nations perspective, Jorgen Lissner, U.N. resident representative in Amman, said that "while many disagreements and disputes over details still exist, we have today reached an unprecedented degree of global consensus on a broad range of human rights issues."

"It is my hope that the international community will be able in the 21st century to continue its momentum in promoting and expanding the full respect for the norms and ideas embodied in the UDHR, while at the same time move boldly forward towards new goals in the field of good governance," Lissner said.

Adding to Khader's comment, Nabil Sharif, chief editor of Al Dustour daily, criticised the way the U.N. deals with human rights issues, saying that the global body applies the declaration selectively.

"Human rights have unfortunately been provided for on a selective basis. It is evident as we commemorate the anniversary of the UDHR that we in the Third World have very little reason to celebrate," he said.

Looking at Jordan, Waleed Sadi, a member of the U.N. Human Rights Committee, said the various aspects and dimensions of human rights in the Kingdom are so interdependent and intertwined that they cannot be severed from one another with impunity.

"Jordanians are increasingly demanding that more attention be directed to their health and 'bread and butter issues', in addition to their quest for civil and political rights," said Sadi.

He cited as examples human rights activists' concentration on the draft Press and Publications Law, the Elections Law, the recent water crisis, poverty and unemployment and environmental problems.

Such domestic issues have "forced national human rights endeavours to broaden their agenda and start addressing these complimentary human rights issues with equal zeal."

Even though Sadi criticised the authorities for "not yet having acquired a human rights culture," he said "Jordan was ushering in a new era of human rights where the perspectives of all Jordanians are being reconciled and harmonised."

The seminar was held to mark the 50th anniversary of the UDHR, which falls on December 10.

ID President Abu Jaber deputised as chairman for HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent.

The seminar featured three sessions entitled "The UDHR Today," "Human Rights in Jordan," and "Non-Governmental Organisations' View of Human Rights in Jordan."

Attending were several human rights advocates, representatives of U.N. agencies, university officials, chief editors of local papers, and deputies and senators.

Rejected Lebanese potatoes 'below agreed quality standards'

By Mohammad Ben Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan Thursday banned the entry of 35 truck loads of potatoes from Lebanon because the produce failed to meet quality standards as stipulated by a new protocol signed between the two countries, an official said yesterday.

The shipment of 700 tonnes of potatoes "was 15-40 per cent below the quality standards set by the protocol"

signed on Tuesday, Salem Lawzi, director of the Agricultural Marketing Organisation, told the Jordan Times.

Lawzi said he inspected the shipment personally at the Jordanian-Syrian border post, 90 kilometres north of Amman.

He said another 30 trucks carrying 600 tonnes of potatoes were allowed to enter Jordan after tests showed the tubers met the set standards.

Lawzi said he informed Lebanese exporters that any agricultural produce sent to

Jordan has to meet standards, or it will be turned away. He said the Lebanese government was also informed of the decision.

According to Lawzi, the agricultural protocol between Jordan and Lebanon includes a new article stipulating quality standards for all agricultural produce.

According to the agreement, potatoes coming from Lebanon have to be clean and free of fungus, darkness, insects and large accumula-

tions of earth, and have to be packed in sacks weighing 25 kilograms or boxes weighing 15 kilograms.

Lawzi said the decision to ban the shipment was in no way linked to Lebanon's June 1 decision to bar 100 Jordanian trucks carrying watermelons from entering Lebanon.

The shipment of Jordanian watermelons was held up at the Lebanese border for 14 days because Jordan exceeded its quota in exporting watermelons to Lebanon.

Dissident communist party group elects shadow council

By Francesca Ciriaci
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A four-month row within the Jordan Communist Party (JCP) over alleged American funding peaked on Friday, when a dissident faction led by veteran leader Yaqoub Zayadine met in an extraordinary congress and elected a shadow Central Council.

Zayadine's followers, who claim to represent 80 per cent of JCP membership, stressed that they had no intention of establishing a second communist party to counter what they term as the pro-Western and collaborationist leadership of current JCP Secretary General Munir Hamameh.

"There are no talks of a new party because a party already exists, and we represent it," said Mazen Hanna, one of Zayadine's junior leaders.

"We do not want the leadership to go either. We want them to come to us," he stated.

at the helm, published a string of articles claiming that "the CIA had infiltrated the JCP by giving huge amounts of money to some of its leaders."

In later developments, it became clear that the target of Zayadine's fire was communist politician and women's rights activist Emily Naffa, who had allegedly received funds from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

The enraged JCP leadership set up an investigation committee, which denied all charges of foreign funding and proceeded to freeze Zayadine's membership for one year and expel Hanna.

Stressing that the problem was political and reiterating its accusations, the dissident faction publicly invited Hamameh and his politburo to attend yesterday's congress and reach a solution.

But Hanna's hope to count representatives of the party's current leadership among the around 200 participants in the extraordinary meeting at the San Rock Hotel were disappointed.

From his home, Hamameh contributed: "This congress is

not only unauthorised, but also illegal according to both party by-laws and state legislation. Whatever decision they reach or announce, it is null and void."

The JCP's answer to Hanna's invitation was a press statement warning of severe disciplinary measures, including expulsion, against all party members attending the congress.

Interior Minister Nayef Qadi was reported as saying last week that he would stay out of the quarrel, and that his ministry would not take any action to impede Zayadine's initiative.

The extraordinary congress "dissolved" the 21-member JCP Central Committee and carried out new elections late last night.

"We were forced to convene this congress because the leadership refused to accept all the solutions we proposed," Hanna told the Jordan Times.

"In our closing statement, we condemned their attitude and the cooperation between some leaders and organisations such as USAID," he said.

Women's groups protest U.S. strikes

AMMAN (AFP) — A group of Jordanian women gathered Friday outside the United States embassy here to stage a silent protest against U.S. missile strikes against suspected terrorist sites in Sudan and Afghanistan last week.

Around 25 women representing Jordanian women's organisations held banners declaring "Down with U.S. terrorist actions" and "U.S.: Patron of terrorism."

"The USA should respect the international law and refrain from any action that provokes indignation and encourages a spiral of violence," the women said in a protest letter to the U.S. embassy.

They also denounced the United States' "protection of terrorism of the state of Israel that has been practising inhuman violations against the Palestinians for the last five decades."

Former Palestinian plane hijacker Layla Khaled, who was present at the demonstration, slammed the United States as "the cause of terror."

WHAT'S GOING ON

CONCERT
* Concert by the National Band of Circassian Folklore at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m. (daily until Sept. 4).

DARAT AL FUNUN SUMMER 98 FESTIVAL
"Summer 98" cultural activities at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, to last until Sept. 30, include:

EXHIBITIONS
* 50 years of graphic art from Lebanon and works by Jordanian artist Sahel Hiari at the Main House.
* Works by Iraqi artist Samer Usama and by Jordanian artist Said Haddadin at the Blue House.
* Installation works by Jordanian artist Samia Zaru at the Byzantine Church.
* Exhibition of photographs "Memory of a Place" by Jordanian artist Hussein Da'seb at the Museum.

EXHIBITIONS
* Exhibition of wrought iron furniture by Jordanian artist Salim Al Bandak at Al Baidar Hall, Kan Zaman Village (Tel. 5862531), until Sept. 17.
* Summer display of products at the Jordan Design and Trade Centre/Noor Al Hussein Foundation, off Wadi Saqra (Tel. 569-9141/2), until Aug. 31.

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Congo government tells rebel troops to lay down arms

KINSHASA, Congo (AP) — Congolese government forces shot down a rebel helicopter over an eastern suburb of the capital Friday, killing and wounding several civilians on the ground, witnesses said.

Thousands were already in the process of fleeing the suburb of Kingasani near the airport, where heavy fighting was reported between government troops and rebel forces, when the helicopter was shot down.

Earlier Friday, the government had broadcast an appeal asking soldiers in President Laurent Kabila's army now fighting for the rebels to lay down their arms.

It was not immediately clear how many people were killed, but Bernard Makena, a local Congolese journalist who witnessed the incident, said he saw many bodies scattered about.

"The body of the helicopter was still burning on the ground," he said. "People were crying and screaming."

The helicopter was a green military aircraft flown by rebel pilots, a government commander said on condition of anonymity. It was unclear where the helicopter came from.

Rebels from a coalition force of ethnic Tutsi fighters and disenchanted members of Kabila's army had slipped into parts of the capital in recent days and launched an assault to take the airport.

But Thursday, the government and allied Angolan, Zimbabwean and Namibian troops were firmly in control of the airport.

More than 1,000 prisoners had been captured in and around the capital, the government said.

Zimbabwe's official news agency, meanwhile, reported that about half the 8,000-strong rebel force on Congo's southwestern front either had been captured or killed.

Joseph Kabila, the president's son and new chief of the military, spoke on state-controlled Voice of the People radio Friday, urging "you Congolese soldiers involved in this Rwandan adventure against our country to drop your arms immediately."

He called on the public not to attack Congolese soldiers trying to surrender, but said nothing about ethnic Tutsi fighters.

Government troops Thursday ran amok in parts of Kinshasa, venting revenge on suspected rebel fighters. The discarded bodies of 18 men, some charred and disfigured, were spotted on city streets and back alleys.

One captive, waiting for mercy, was hurled off the side of a bridge and then shot to death.

The killings infuriated the rebel command, who warned they would "severely punish those who think like Kabila and are guilty of bloody crimes of lynching people in Kinshasa."

The insurgents had scored repeated military successes early in the rebellion, capturing a number of important cities in eastern Congo.

But the deployment of Angolan, Zimbabwean and now Namibian troops has apparently turned the tide in the southwest.

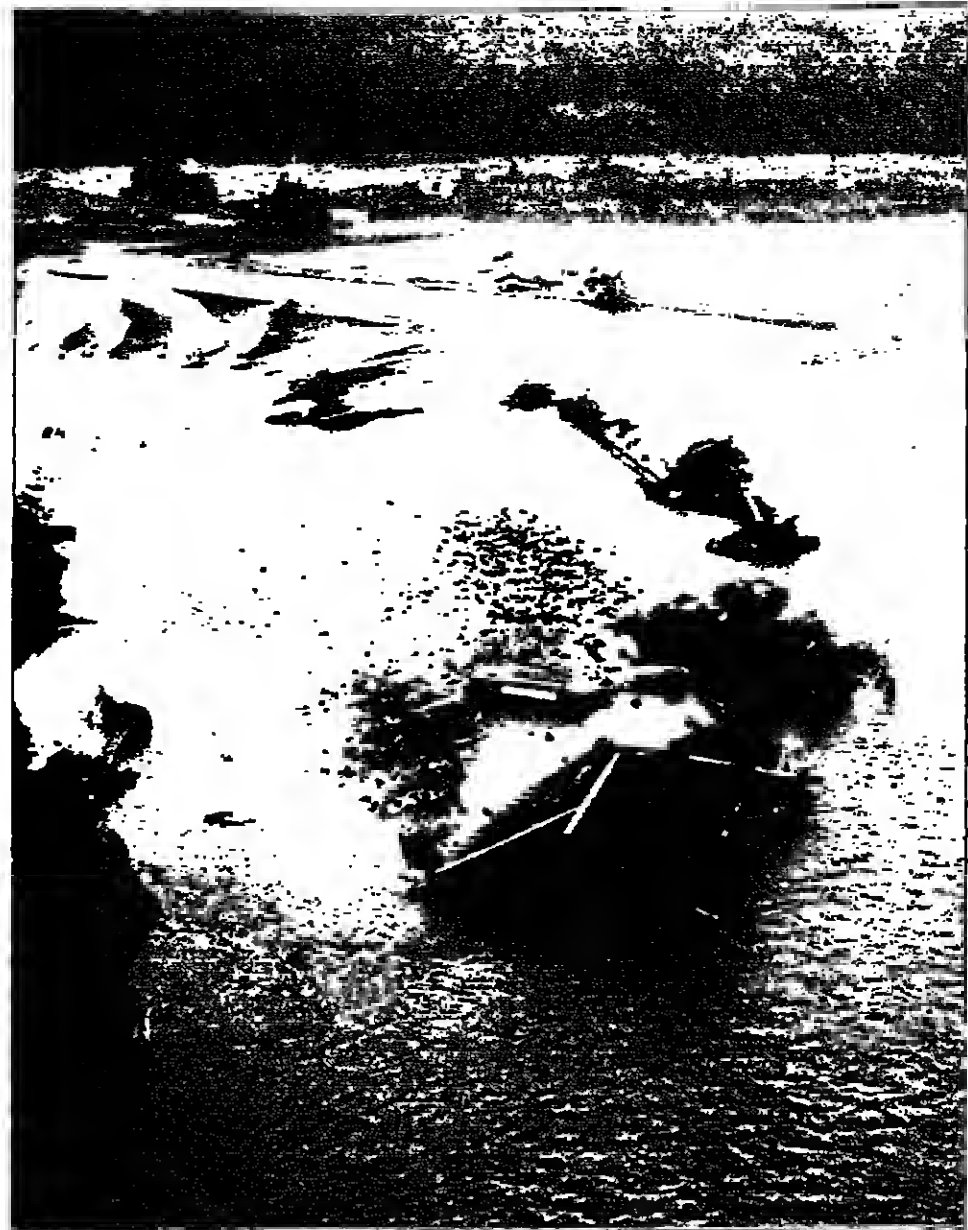
Rebel forces, however, still occupy the Congo River port town of Matadi and a major power dam that supplies Kinshasa with electricity.

In the east, the rebels controlled several important cities, including Goma, Bukavu and Kisangani.

Rwanda and Uganda — which helped Kabila to oust longtime Zairean dictator Mobutu Sese Seko in May of last year — turned on him because of his inability to stem cross-border attacks by militants based in eastern Congo.

Uganda acknowledges its forces are inside Congolese territory, but earlier said they were there as part of a prior defence agreement with Congo and not on behalf of the rebels.

The country's presidential defence adviser, Maj.-Gen Salim Saleh, told the government-run New Vision newspaper Thursday that Ugandan forces will not leave the country until Kabila accepts a cease-fire and as long as he continues to oppose peace proposals spearheaded by South African President Nelson Mandela.



Japanese houses in the village of Nasu are swept away by floods. Torrential rain in parts of Japan sent rivers spilling over their banks and set off landslides that left more than 10 people dead and at least five missing, local authorities said (Reuters photo)

Death toll from storm in Japan rises to 13

TOKYO (AP) — Tens of thousands of people were told to evacuate their homes Friday as Tropical Storm Rex — blamed for mudslides, flooding and at least 13 deaths — dumped torrential rains across much of Japan.

Nearly 40,000 people were told to flee their homes in Mito, a city about 100 kilometres northeast of Tokyo, because of possible flooding from the rains, which began Wednesday night.

Police confirmed 13 deaths by Friday evening, with three missing and 30 injured.

Rex was located 1,000 kilometres south of Tokyo early evening Friday and moving slowly northeast, according to the meteorological agency. It said the storm had sustained wind speeds of 90 kilometres per hour near its centre.

The rains have been caused by the storm pushing warm, wet air from the central Pacific Ocean north.

Some 1,000 soldiers trudged through mud and debris Friday near the town of Nasu, just north of Tokyo, for the people still missing after a river burst its banks Thursday.

News reports said they recovered the body of a man, leaving three people unaccounted for.

The torrent also killed a 60-year-old university professor and destroyed or damaged more than 34 houses in the town, which has seen a record 839 millimetres falling since the rains began at about midnight Wednesday.

Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi was scheduled to inspect disaster areas and evacuation sites in Fukushima, Tochigi and Nara Saturday.

Meanwhile, officials in Fukushima prefecture, 175 kilometres north of Tokyo, were investigating why a warning never reached an institution for the handicapped where five people died when a mudslide slammed into their building Thursday morning.

In the immediate Tokyo area, the effects of the storm were limited mainly to disruption of transportation.

Several highways and train lines were closed in and around Tokyo. East Japan Railway Co. reduced traffic along the Chuo line running through central Tokyo by 80 per cent.

The railway also halted bullet trains between the cities of Yokohama and Aizumi, southwest of the capital.

British minister appeals directly to Sierra Leone over death sentences

LONDON (AFP) — Britain has appealed directly to Sierra Leone President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah for clemency in the case of 16 people convicted of taking part in a coup, officials said Friday.

Foreign Office Minister Tony Lloyd spoke with Kabbah Thursday to express "in the strongest possible terms" Britain's concern about the imposition of the death penalty on a group including journalists and former officials.

"I said that Britain wanted to see peace and prosperity fully restored in Sierra Leone," Lloyd said in a statement.

"We believed that the best way to achieve this was through a proper process of reconciliation. Showing clemency in these cases would be an important step in this process."

Lloyd's appeal was the latest in a series of statements from London appealing to Kabbah to commute the sentences.

He said that Kabbah told him that when the time came to consider clemency for the group he would give the British representation "serious consideration."

The 16 were found guilty Monday of collaborating with the junta that ousted Kabbah in May 1997.

Kabbah was reinstated in March.

The condemned, including five journalists, were tried on charges of collaborating with the Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC) junta that was later driven out of Sierra Leone by Nigerian-led West African troops.

Earlier this year the British authorities were accused of tacitly approving moves by a British company to supply military aid and equipment to help reinstate Kabbah — in violation of an international arms embargo.

An inquiry found Britain had not formally approved the deliveries.

Blocked Kosovo aid convoy able to resume journey — UNHCR

GENEVA (AFP) — A relief convoy blocked by Serb forces near Pristina, capital of the war-torn province of Kosovo, was able to resume its journey Friday, a U.N. refugee spokesman said.

"The convoy which was stopped by Serb police yesterday outside of Pristina is on its way today," Kris Janowski, a spokesman of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) told journalists.

The eight-truck convoy was carrying supplies to feed more than 20,000 families for one month, to the Decane and Pec regions where fierce fighting has forced tens of thousands of people to flee their homes.

After strongly protesting, the UNHCR secured assurances from the police that the convoy could travel freely, Janowski said.

But the UNHCR was not given a "satisfactory explanation. Police told us they had orders to turn back everything on the Pristina-Pec road basically," Janowski said.

The convoy was stopped at Statina airport, 20 kilometres from Pristina, in an action which recalled all-too-similar scenes from the war in Bosnia in the early 1990s, he said.

"We hope it was a one-off and it was just a freak incident and we have full access now. But having been through this nightmare of daily back and forth in Bosnia, we are very cautious," the spokesman said.

In Kosovo, Serb sources said the convoy had been stopped due to fighting in the area in which the convoy was headed.

The incident happened three days after three Kosovar Albanian aid workers working for Mother Teresa Society were killed by Serb forces.

The killings aroused fears among the humanitarian community in Kosovo that Yugoslavia is deliberately targeting relief workers in an attempt to punish the civilian population seen to be aiding the rebels.

More than 700 people, mostly Albanians, have been killed in six months of clashes between Belgrade government forces and Kosovo Albanian rebels fighting for the independence of the southern Serbian province.

The UNHCR estimates at 170,000 the number of homeless people in Kosovo.

One year after her death, 'Diana fatigue' appears to set in

LONDON (AFP) — One year after her death Britons are deluged with media coverage of Diana, Princess of Wales, amid signs that many are tiring of the millions of words being written about her life, her death and her legacy.

The run-up to the August 31 anniversary of Diana's death in a Paris car accident has seen a torrent of commemorative issues from Britain's newspapers, television specials and "confessions" that last year's public outpouring of grief was not quite as global as first thought.

There will be no official ceremony in memory of the princess, though the Union Flag will be flown at half mast throughout the country.

The royal family itself which had such an equivocal relationship with the world's most famous woman will hold a private service on Monday at Balmoral, the queen's official residence in Scotland.

Her two children, princes Harry and William, will be there as will British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Diana's immediate family, headed by her controversial brother Earl Spencer, will spend the day at Althorp, the stately home part of which he has turned into a shrine to his sister.

More controversially, Mohamed Al Fayed, the father of Dodi Fayed, Diana's partner at the time who also died in the crash, is to unveil a bronze statue of the couple at his Harrods department store in London.

However, on the day itself a few hundred are expected to lay wreaths, a shadow of last year's dramatic scenes when millions came out onto the streets of London to attend her funeral while an estimated 31 million people watched the event on television.

In a poll for the conservative Daily Telegraph broadsheet newspaper, more than 90 per cent of those questioned said they were not planning any act of commemoration.

"Diana fatigue" it seems is beginning to set in. In an analysis of the number of times her name is mentioned in the press, the Economist weekly charts a steeply declining level of interest in the media since the hysteria of a year ago.

But Diana's legacy still registers an effect.

Buckingham Palace acknowledged this week that Diana's death forced the royal family to reexamine itself in the light of her more informal and modern style, prompting the queen to spend more "quality time" with her subjects.

If the royal family has taken a leaf out of Diana's book by being seen in more normal settings and appearing less aloof, there are still those who rail against the attempts to deify the princess.

Cardinal Basil Hume, the Archbishop of Westminster said he hoped for an end to the "hype" surrounding Diana. She did many good things, he said, but she was a "flawed person."

"Diana was by no means a saint, she never claimed to be, and it's very foolish to pretend that she was. I think that Princess Diana was clearly a flawed person."

"But she did a great deal of good and she was much loved by the nation," he said.

Hume's remarks struck a markedly different note to those of the former Archbishop of Canterbury Lord Cogan who recently attacked Diana for having "pretty loose morals."

In death as in life, the princess still evokes strong reactions from people from all walks of life but some dispute the claim that she was a catalyst for unbuttoning Britain's stiff upper lip.

Sociologist Jonathan Dollimore, who has written a book on death in Western culture, says that Diana was "a symbol of changing attitudes to death, not the cause."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Prodi's government is Italy's second-longest

ROME (AFP) — Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi's centre-left government looks set to become the second longest-serving administration in the history of the republic — with just 834 days in office. Assuming that it remains in power until Saturday, Prodi's Social Democrat-dominated team will be second only to that of Bettino Craxi which ran 1,058 days from August 4 1983 until June 27, 1986. Although his parliamentary majority depends on support from the Refounded Communists, Prodi will however be able to claim the title of the only post-war centre-left government in Italy. He has been in power since May 18, 1996, and will have to soldier on until after April 11, 1999, to overtake Craxi's record. The two lengths of tenure say much about Italy's chronically unstable political history, which has been punctuated by 55 different governments since 1945. The shortest of these withstood just nine days in office, from Feb. 17 to 26, 1972. Not that Prodi's government has had an easy ride during its so far short history. The prime minister temporarily resigned only to swiftly resume office last October following fierce disagreement with the Communists about tough spending measures. Another test of the Prodi government's stability looms this autumn when parliament is due to examine a proposed finance bill.

Annan visits slave fortress in Ghana

ACCRA (AFP) — U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan visited Cape Coast castle in Ghana, a fortress built in part on the wealth accrued by European nations from the slave trade, the Ghanaian press reported Friday. Accompanied by his wife Nane and the Central Regional Minister Kojo Yankah, Annan Thursday toured the castle, which was built between the 15th and 17th centuries by the then European nations engaged in the lucrative trade of gold, ivory and slaves. According to a report by the state-owned Ghanaian Times, Annan showed particular interest for the male and female dungeons known respectively as the "Hall of No Return" and the "Door of No Return," and the slave cell. Annan also had time to visit an exhibition on the theme "Crossroads of people, crossroads of trade." Cape Coast castle, situated 165 kilometres west of the capital, has been declared a World Heritage Tourism site by UNESCO, as has another slave fortress in the west, Elmina Castle and the adjoining Fort Saint Jago. The U.N. secretary general is due to leave Accra Saturday for a private visit to the neighbouring Ivory Coast where he will meet President Henri Konan Bedie.

Sri Lanka fighting kills 93 in two weeks

COLOMBO (AFP) — At least 93 Tamil rebels and government troops have been killed in two weeks of fierce fighting in northern and eastern Sri Lanka, the defence ministry said Friday. Fighting was especially heavy near the rebel-held town of Mankulam where 44 members of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and three soldiers were killed, ministry spokesman Sunil Tennakoon said. In all, 81 rebels died along with 12 soldiers in the fighting over the last two weeks. The government has imposed military censorship on both foreign and local media since fighting escalated in June. The LTTE is leading a campaign for an independent Tamil homeland in the island's northeast. More than 55,000 people have been killed in the conflict since 1972.

Authorities urge novice climbers to quit, after 14 deaths in a week

GRENOBLE, France (AP) — French authorities Friday urged less-experienced climbers to stay away from Mont Blanc after at least 14 people died in a week, falling to their deaths from the rain-slicked face of Europe's highest mountain. "Climbers who don't have great experience with how ice develops and with cramming techniques must currently avoid scaling Moot Blanc," Jean-Yves Claudon, assistant chief of mountain gendarmes in Chamonix said by telephone. High-altitude rains last week left a coat of ice on the mountain, leaving some usually simple routes highly treacherous. Authorities said 14 climbers from around Europe, including a German father and son, suffered fatal falls. Mont Blanc rises to 4,800 metres between the borders of France and Italy.

Japanese outlast the rest of the world

TOKYO (AFP) — Japanese people lived longer than ever in 1997, outlasting the rest of the world, the health ministry estimated in an annual report Friday. The average life expectancy of Japanese women rose to 83.82 years from the previous year's 83.59, while the average Japanese man survived 77.19 years, up from 77.01, the ministry said. Japanese women recorded the longest life expectancy for the 13th straight year and Japanese men for the second year, according to latest available data, it said. Matching 1997 data for other countries was not available. The latest figures said French women ranked second with an average life expectancy of 81.9 years in 1996. Women in Hong Kong had average lifespan of 81.8 in 1996 and Swiss women 81.7 years in 1994-1995. For the men, Hong Kong came second with an average lifespan of 76.3 years in 1996, followed by Iceland with 76.2 years in 1995-1996 and Sweden with 75.91 years in 1996. Figures from Russia said in 1995 men lasted only 58.27 years while women continued on to 71.70 years.

First conviction for Internet death threats

COPENHAGEN (AFP) — A 22-year-old Danish man was fined 2,000 kroner (\$300) for having sent 79 E-mail death threats to a journalist, believed to be the first conviction for Internet death threats, a court in Naestved said Friday. The E-mail was sent to a journalist for the mass circulation daily, B.T., threatening both the journalist and his family. The man considered himself to have been unjustly accused in a report on a stabbing that the journalist had written. The police tracked down and arrested the man, despite his attempts to mask the origin of his messages by sending them via addresses in the United States.

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Boost for judiciary

ONCE AGAIN the judiciary received a boost when His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, reaffirmed the leadership's commitment to an independent judiciary. During a visit to the Palace of Justice on Thursday, the Regent highlighted the vital role of the judiciary in the development and progress of the Kingdom on all fronts. In order for judges to play their role, the Prince stressed, they must be protected from all forms of pressure.

But such a state can only be attained when their tenure is secure and free from the whims or dictates of any executive agency whether directly or indirectly. In addition, judges must be well paid so that they may enjoy economic security as well.

The improvement of the third branch of government has been on the national agenda ever since the establishment of the Kingdom. Much progress has been achieved, but much more remains to be done. What the court system urgently needs is a constant campaign to upgrade it in every sense of the word. The call for the creation of constitutional court remains one of the key issues awaiting resolution. The quest for such a court had been amply reflected in the National Charter adopted more than seven years ago, yet it remains unfulfilled.

Unless existing higher courts are given jurisdiction to pronounce themselves on constitutional issues, the task remains in the hands of a quasi-judicial organ. No country in the world grants the judicial mandate to rule on constitutional grounds to non-judicial tribunals. The sooner Jordan takes the indispensable step of creating a judicial body capable of ruling on the constitutionality of legislation and practices, the better it will be for the country. Only through this judicial function can the democratic process be advanced and consolidated.

Any such constitutional court calls for the selection of the highest possible calibre of judges who are indeed free from political pressures. It also means that constitutional court judges should be professionally capable. Until Jordan resolves this major shortcoming in its judicial branch of government, its court system will remain lacking.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I'S Fahed Fanek discussed the role of exports in overcoming the country's high unemployment. Fanek said there are two ways to determine that role. First, Jordan last year exported goods worth JD1,066 million or 20 per cent of national income. Hence the total national income creates jobs for around 1 million people. Exports create 20 per cent of all available jobs, or around 200,000 job opportunities, said Fanek. The second determination concerns industrial and mining sectors since they are responsible for 55 per cent of exports. Fanek claims that one employee is needed for each JD10,000 of mining products, therefore exports are responsible for only 10.7 per cent of jobs available in the country. He said the results are totally different, but the indications of those figures are important. The writer concluded that exports are essential in creating job opportunities.

AL DUSTOUR'S Oreib Rantawi discussed the stalemate in the peace process and the paradoxical statements issued by the Palestinian delegations in Jordan and Egypt. In Cairo their statements show pessimism about the future of the peace process and that the American proposal is in its death throes. They claim a need for a new proposal to move the peace process back on the road, apparently the French-Egyptian proposal, which has not been made public yet. In Amman, the Palestinians show less pessimism about the situation and the American 13 per cent troop redeployment proposal. This can be justified by the way the two countries view their own roles in the process. Jordan sees itself as a partner in the peace process, while Egypt only sponsors it from afar, said Rantawi.

Jordanian Perspective

U.S. 'miscalculations' over strikes

Dr. Musa Keilani

THE U.S. has miscalculated this time with its missile strike on Sudan and Afghanistan. And it is not likely to escape easily from the fallout of that decision.

International public opinion would have accepted the U.S. action on Afghanistan if only because the world seems to have written off that country until its warlords realise that it is up to them, to settle the chaos in their country. To a large extent regardless of international laws, conventions and norms of behaviour, the world would have opted not to challenge the U.S. assertion that "terrorists" were being trained in Afghanistan. Tens of thousands of stories have appeared in the international media after the end of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan that "Arab Afghans" had come home, not to roost but to make trouble for their governments and others through extremism and sabotage. The massive wave of violence in Algeria and the "Islamist" drive against the regime of Hosni Mubarak in Egypt have largely convinced the international community that the "Arab Afghans" are a force to be reckoned with, which cannot be subdued through conventional means. In addition, it was understood that there was indeed a strong Afghan connection to the developments in Algeria and Egypt.

Furthermore, the "puritan" Islamic image that the dominant Taleban militia in Afghanistan built for itself added to the international indifference towards that country. As such, the U.S. missile strike on what was said to be a terrorist training camp would have passed muster on the world political scene.

But Sudan is a different story. Not many people had

fully bought the stories of Sudan being a haven for "terror" groups or was involved in assassination plots against heads of state of neighbouring countries. There was always a significant element of scepticism accompanying any charge that the military government in Khartoum and the National Islamic Front (NIF), the main power behind the regime, were offering not only shelter for "Middle Eastern extremists" but also encouraging them to undertake terrorist attacks in the region.

Whether or not Sudan was guilty as charged, the U.S. missile strike altered the picture, because Washington's assertion that the target of the attack was a chemical weapons plant rather than a pharmaceutical company has been proven wrong.

The strike also came against the backdrop of intense international attention on the starving millions in southern Sudan. As such, an attack against a plant producing life-saving medicine in Sudan could not escape international censure. And that is what is happening now.

The courage with which the Sudanese confronted and challenged the international community to verify for itself whether the plant was indeed a chemical weapons facility, has pulled the rug from under Washington's feet, which is now left with lame arguments that the plant "could" have been used in producing chemical weapons. Also, the U.S. sought to bring in an "Iraqi" link with the Sudan plant, only to be caught on the wrong foot again with the revelation that the company did have "Iraqi orders" not for components of chemical weapons, but for medicine under the oil-for-food deal between Baghdad and the United Nations.

While trying to absorb that slap on the face, Washington is now engaged in a damage-limitation exercise which include carefully placed "intelligence" leaks that soil samples, "clandestinely" obtained from the Sudan plant, had yielded traces of a manmade chemical which could be used in the production of the deadly VX nerve gas. Despite the intensity of the U.S. campaign, few are likely to buy it except perhaps Britain, Washington's traditional ally in Europe. Israel of course, as well as a handful of other countries which have no choice but to publicly accept and support, for whatever that is worth, all U.S. policies and actions.

That does not absolve the U.S. of any guilt in the eyes of the international community at large. It is up to the United Nations to pass judgement on two counts: first that the U.S. violated international laws and conventions when it struck across international borders without explicit clearance from the United Nations, as was the case in the 1991 Gulf war. Second, that the U.S. bears sole responsibility for the destruction of the Sudan plant (it is Washington's own affair if it had received and acted upon false or misleading intelligence information), and should not only make good all losses suffered by Sudan but also make a public apology to Khartoum. Beyond that the U.S. should undertake, in a United Nations context, that it will not embark on summary military actions against other countries under cover of Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter.

The question is, are the strategists in Washington willing and courageous enough to accept mistakes as such and move to rectify them?



Change of government dominates agenda

Reviewed by Mohammad Ben Hussein

LOCAL COLUMNISTS last week discussed the change of government and the expected policies of the newly-appointed government led by the Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh.

AL RA'I'S Fahed Fanek discussed the change of government. The Majali government was engaged in heated battle with the press, said Fanek, in which both sides were hit very hard. The ex-government managed to pass the absurd and inhuman Press and Publications Law, which will limit journalists' freedom, said Fanek. But, he claimed, the press managed to beat the government by making it lose credibility. Fanek then reviewed some of the newly-appointed Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh's characteristics. He said Tarawneh's qualifications enables him to steer the ship very well, but more importantly than this is his past: appointed for the first time in this post gives him the incentive to take hard decisions and make his reform plans public. Fanek said nobody expects Tarawneh to wave a magic wand and do the impossible. The new government, said Fanek, faces major challenges that Jordan has never faced in its entire history, including the water crisis, the economic growth rate, rampant unemployment, soaring poverty and the budget deficit. Fanek said Jordanians know the problems the new government is facing and will support it in all possible ways. He noted that the government realises the seriousness of the crises and as a result half of the Cabinet are economists including the premier himself.

AL DUSTOUR'S Ali Safadi said the former government resigned because it was unable to deal with the series of crises which occurred in the country, the government was hesitant and indecisive, and this, he claimed with those crises were the motive for the His Majesty to ask for the formation of a new government led by a young man full of life and enthusiasm. Safadi expects that the current prime minister to uproot all problems and avoid them in the near and far future. He said the direction of the government is very clear, and according to this people can judge its performance. He called for transparency and said the Jordanian people have to be informed what is happening around them. The government should not think Jordanians are ignorant. The writer also called on the new government to avoid prejudice and treat all Jordanians equally.

AL ARAB AL YAWM's Mohammad Subeichi said the newly-appointed government faces its first test with the water crisis. He said if the government handles the problem wisely, it will become popular, and called on the government to be stern in dealing with the issue. He said the government should not be hesitant, because this will tarnish its reputation. Jordanians will then feel more depressed than they were during the time of the former prime minister Abdul Salam Majali. Subeichi said Jordanians are waiting to see the results of the investigation into the water crisis published in the newspapers. He called on the government to be as transparent as His Majesty King Hussein asked it to be. Subeichi warned against the consequences of concealing those results, people will feel that some senior officials are above the law. Additionally, hiding the report will serve those in the opposition who are against normalisation with Israel. People should know the truth, and if the results of the investigation are not published soon, they will not believe in anything the government may publish at a later date, he warned.

AL ARAB AL YAWM's Mazen Saket earlier last week praised the change of government. He said Jordanians from all walks of life had called for this change, and the opposition as well as the Parliament wanted. This was not because of personal grudges, but from necessity arising out of the continuous deterioration of Jordan's political and economic situations. Saket claimed that the new government is better at executing policies rather than drawing them. He said the country will not see so many changes in the political makeup of the country, but expected that changes will occur in jobs performance and administrative matters inside the ministries.

AL RA'I'S Fakhri Qawar said the hardest mission the current government faces is regaining people's trust after the Majali government had lost it. He said this could only be done by respecting the right of the individual and the opposing opinions seriously. Qawar added that the government should not look down at the opposition parties or other organisations representing the masses. He called on the government to pay attention to Jordanians—Arab relations and try to boost bilateral links. Qawar added that integral matters need much attention especially the rampant unemployment, the growth rate figures and poverty.



LETTERS

In defence of Haddadin

To the editor:

I HAVE noticed over the past seven weeks that your articles have repeated, word for word, the same sentences and paragraphs from previous articles. This may be acceptable when the information you recycle is accurate and true. But it cannot be tolerated when your repeated sentences are erroneous and misleading.

One sentence that has been used over and over again in your articles reads: "The water crisis climaxed on August 9 with the resignation of former water minister, Munther Haddadin, who enraged many Jordanians by responding to the water problem with a series of contradictory statements — initially blaming it on unusual levels of algae and then on operational and human error at the ZWP."

However, in the article printed Thursday/Friday ("Mulki urges W. Amman residents to ration water") explaining how the water problem is coming to an end, your reporter explicitly states three reasons behind the problem, which are:

1. Inadequate activated carbon filters at ZWP.
2. Failure to use the appropriate chemicals to "eliminate the water's unusual taste and smell."
3. Soaring summer temperatures that resulted in unusually high levels of algae in the water supplies reaching ZWP, which, in turn, harmed its filtering capacity.

These three problems, which according to the article are now under control, illustrate the truth behind the former water minister's "contradictory" explanations to the water problem. First, the inadequacy of the filters available seven weeks ago can be interpreted as an "operational" error since those filters were not equipped to deal with the problem. Secondly, the ZWP technicians' negligence in the use of appropriate purification chemicals to "eliminate the water's unusual taste and smell" can be characterised as a "human" error. And, finally, and as clear as the sun, "unusually high levels of algae found in the water supplies" can only be understood as "unusual levels of algae" found in the water supply.

Samer G. Zureikat
Amman.

Wrong is wrong

To the editor:

AFTER READING your recent editorial concerning Americans and morality I feel compelled to reply. First, I would like to state that I support the Palestinian cause wholeheartedly. That being said, I feel you might have missed the boat concerning Americans. Most of my countrymen would very much like to remain on friendly terms with the Arab World. However, we do have a problem when countries blindly support terrorism masquerading in the cloak of Islam. Nowhere in the Koran does it say you can bomb innocent people. I am Catholic, but that does not mean that I will support a Catholic country such as Italy for the sake of it. American Jews unilaterally support Israel regardless of their actions, and the Arab people seem to be guilty of the same thing. This is what many of us in the U.S.A do not understand. When someone such as Bin Laden threatens to destroy a nation and its people, in my mind he has just declared war. The American government has for months repeatedly asked the Sudanese and Afghani government to stop harbouring terrorists.

I might also add that we would not have resorted to military action if our embassies had not been bombed and there being overwhelming proof that Bin Laden committed these acts. The fact that he is Muslim is not germane to the matter; if he had been Hindu, Christian or any other religion we would have done the same thing. Need I remind your readers that Hitler was a Roman Catholic.

Bela Lemak
Florida, U.S.A.

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Samer G. Zureika

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Bala Lemak Florida, U.S.A

Features/ News

Panic over mid-air misses



14 August: Two aircraft fly in opposite directions over southern England: a Boeing 737 of Belgian Sabena Airlines at 29,000ft on its way to Brussels; an Air France Airbus A340 at lower altitude en route from Paris to Montreal.

The Air France plane is instructed by West Drayton air traffic control to climb to 29,000ft and heads into the path of the Boeing. With the planes 16 miles apart near Maidstone, Kent, there is less than a minute to prevent a mid-air crash.

Both planes make severe turns and pass just a mile and a half apart.

SENIOR CONTROLLER COACHES TRAINEE ALARM FLASHES TO WARN OF COLLISION SENIOR TAKES CONTROL AND ALERTS PILOTS THAT WAS A CLOSE THING...

12 seconds from disaster

By Joanna Walters

TWO PASSENGER jets were seconds away from a midair disaster over southern Britain nine days ago after a trainee air traffic controller unwittingly told one aircraft to climb into the path of another.

A catastrophe was averted only when the supervising controller reacted to the collision alarm flashing on his screen and took over.

The two aircraft closed to one and a half miles at a combined speed of 1,000 mph and were 12 seconds from impact when the controller ordered them to turn sharply away from each other.

The incident took place over a heavily populated area and is just one of several reported in the past month of near misses. Concerns over an overloaded air traffic control system have raised safety fears as peak holiday season flights soar to record levels.

Britain's skies are regarded by pilots and foreign air traffic controllers as the safest in the world, given the huge volumes of traffic they handle. But experienced controllers warned recently that the system is close to breaking point and there is no margin for error.

"The probability of something going catastrophically wrong has increased," one told The Observer.

In the latest incident, on August 14, a senior controller was coaching a trainee at Britain's main air traffic control centre at West Drayton, near Heathrow airport.

A controller who was on the same shift said: "Their sector got busy and the trainee was prompting him. In the process one aircraft was told to climb to a level where there was already another one flying."

The Air France Airbus, en route from Paris to Montreal, was told to climb to 29,000 ft into the path of a Boeing 737 belonging to the Belgian Sabena Airlines travelling to Brussels.

The first two controllers knew of an impending collision, was when the "conflict alert" flashed on screen, telling them the two jets were 16 miles apart over Detling, a small town near Maidstone, Kent.

The senior controller frantically contacted the two aircraft, knowing he had less than a minute to avert disaster.

"They should have been five miles apart, but they ended up just about one and a half miles apart," the controller who witnessed the episode said. "They were told to make severe turns and passed down the side of each other at the same level. They could have crashed."

Just 24 hours earlier, over Dartmoor in Devon, a Boeing 747 jumbo jet heading for Gatwick and a Lockheed TriStar that had taken off for Barbados passed too close to each other, again at 29,000 ft.

There were 32 near misses caused by air traffic control errors last year. In the first six months of this year there were 15 near misses, and in the past month there were at least three.

There were also 30 official air traffic control "overload" reports in the first six months of this year, compared with 16 for the whole of last year. "Overload" describes a situation where a controller has too many aircraft to handle. Last month, as traffic reached record levels, controllers reported six cases of overload.

Keith Williams, director of safety and operations at National Air Traffic Services — the air traffic control arm of the Civil Aviation Authority — said the system was coping and did not handle more traffic than it was capable of. "I would be very, very surprised if the system ever reached 100 per cent capacity. It turns at 80 per cent," he said.

The controllers' trade union, IPMS, argues that at certain times the system is running at 100 per cent and that 90 per cent is the norm.

Almost 10 million people travelled through the main London airports, Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted, last month and airports owner BAA reported that 31 July was its busiest day ever, handling 402,000 passengers.

Traffic is growing by more than 9 per cent a year and is forecast to double in the next 10 years.

West Drayton handled a million aircraft in 1989 and almost 1.6 million last year. A new £340 million nerve centre was due to be in place in 1996 at Swanwick in Hampshire to replace West Drayton's outdated area control activities above 19,000 ft. The new technology was modelled on a

pioneering United States system that was abandoned when it was found to be flawed. The Civil Aviation Authority pressed ahead with developing Swanwick's system, but it has been plagued with so many software bugs that it is now expected to be at least another two years before it is up and running.

The lengthening delays and increasingly crowded skies prompted the British government in June to launch an independent "safety and viability audit" into West Drayton and Swanwick.

The Defence Evaluation and Research Agency is carrying out the audit and will report in the autumn. The British government plans to privatise part of the air traffic control system, although it has not decided when.

Controllers who spoke to The Observer last week said that it would be almost impossible for the "old and tatty" area control room at West Drayton to cope without extreme difficulty and increasing risks to safety. At particularly busy times the smallest mishap can cause chaos.

And on July 20 this year, there was more than a small mishap.

The latest Civil Aviation Authority flight safety report and controllers' own accounts both highlight incidents that turned the operation at West Drayton into a nightmare.

Electrical storms that had not been forecast hit the south of England in the afternoon, prompting hundreds of aircraft that were already in the sky to change course

in an effort to avoid the bad weather.

Stormclouds cause turbulence at high level that, at best, make for an uncomfortable flight and at their most severe can tear the wings off an aircraft.

The teams of controllers in the windowless control rooms were already dealing with heavy levels of summer traffic and the system had become overloaded over the North Sea for a short time in the morning peak.

Not only was there a near miss between two jets that left controllers shaking, but the busy Dover and Lydd sectors that funnel traffic over the South Coast reportedly became overloaded for seven hours.

A Syrian Arab Airlines Boeing 747 heading from Damascus to Heathrow and an Alitalia McDonnell Douglas MD80 arriving from Italy had both been circling in one of the "stacks" where aircraft are kept waiting for the runways to clear.

As each was told to leave the "stack" to start its descent to Heathrow, the two controllers realised the jets were approaching each other, although still at a safe distance. A controller told one of the jets to turn right.

The pilot refused because it would have taken him into the storm, so the controller told him to descend instead.

The skies were so busy the second controller did not realise what was happening and also told the other jet to descend — into the path of the first aircraft.

As conflict alerts flashed madly on the two controllers' screens, they realised

with horror what had happened and ordered the jets to turn away "fast," whether that meant flying into thunder or not.

Such incidents and the strains they place on controllers are highly unusual, but not unprecedented at West Drayton. But what happened next has been described as "simply appalling."

After a near miss, a distressed controller always takes a break and is allowed to go home to recover.

The system was under such pressure that afternoon that at least one of the two controllers had to stay at the radar screen for a further 20 minutes. Then, after a break, the controller was persuaded to stay on for the rest of the shift.

One controller said last week: "When I saw my colleagues two days later, no one had talked to them about the incident, let alone offered any advice or counselling."

"They told me they felt so guilty about the near miss they had not slept for the previous two nights. But they were still turning up for work. I think the way it has been handled is appalling."

"If you thought about the fact that you were nearly killing hundreds of people every time you made a mistake you would walk out of the job and never come back."

— The Observer

The Saturday Crossword

GEOGRAPHY LESSON

By Bernice Gordon, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

<p>ACROSS</p> <p>1 Gone by</p> <p>5 Zigzag turns</p> <p>10 Sophia Loren's Carlo</p> <p>15 Floating jail?</p> <p>18 "Types" sequel</p> <p>20 Alexander of '50</p> <p>21 NYC theater</p> <p>22 Archibald Sassen</p> <p>23 Sultan Qabus bin</p> <p>24 Sald's capital</p> <p>25 Edo, today</p> <p>26 Acquire with special effort</p> <p>28 Wild Asian dog</p> <p>30 Woolly</p> <p>31 Hebrew month</p> <p>32 Components of everything</p> <p>33 Wee woolly one</p> <p>34 Scheduled</p> <p>35 Pussie bands</p> <p>38 Pastiche</p> <p>42 Sits of Morro</p> <p>44 Largest city in Africa</p> <p>46 Only thing I have for you?</p> <p>47 Harvests</p> <p>48 Back part</p> <p>50 Self-esteem</p> <p>51 Neighbor of Syr.</p> <p>52 Journal</p> <p>54 Loud, raucous cry</p> <p>56 Lazy lady?</p> <p>58 State gambling scheme</p> <p>60 Capital near the Red Sea</p> <p>63 Sen... CA</p> <p>64 Proprietor</p> <p>DOWN</p> <p>1 Megalithic</p> <p>2 Marching band</p> <p>3 No great shakes</p> <p>4 Keyboard</p> <p>5 Erik of "Chips"</p> <p>6 Smitty, at times</p> <p>7 Huff and Jaffe</p> <p>8 Alfonso's queen</p> <p>9 Dunker</p> <p>10 View from Mount Vernon</p> <p>11 Ancient coins</p> <p>12 Resub rival</p> <p>13 Writer Josephine</p> <p>14 Quarantine</p> <p>15 Shipshape chair</p> <p>16 Stanton movie, "Man"</p> <p>17 Remsen and Levin</p> <p>18 Left</p> <p>19 Post W.H.</p> <p>20 Lee Curtis</p> <p>21 Up a tree</p> <p>22 Italian bread?</p> <p>23 "The Last of"</p> <p>24 Apples to a surface</p> <p>25 Of words</p> <p>26 Chin Dynasty</p> <p>27 Banished</p> <p>28 Survives</p> <p>29 Bullets, briefly</p> <p>30 Excavated</p> <p>31 Grand... Opry</p> <p>32 MOX divided by V</p> <p>33 Stupor: pret.</p> <p>34 Marketing starter?</p> <p>35 Burial site of William the Conqueror</p> <p>36 View from the Elburz Mountains</p> <p>37 Marching for inspection</p> <p>38 Medical breads</p> <p>39 Filmed, stangly</p> <p>40 Confederates</p> <p>41 Soldiers, casually</p> <p>42 Get on</p> <p>43 Manoeuvre</p> <p>44 Mortgage condition, often</p> <p>45 Food from heaven</p> <p>46 Head shivers</p> <p>47 Location of "The Last Supper"</p> <p>48 City northwest of Gibraltar</p> <p>49 1st letter</p> <p>50 Town known for its witches</p> <p>51 Silent-films</p> <p>52 Ancient Sarr</p> <p>53 Sea eagle</p> <p>54 Easy get</p> <p>55 Bagnold and others</p> <p>56 More national</p> <p>57 Ramona, by another name</p> <p>58 Wards off</p> <p>59 Ligit</p> <p>60 Reverence</p> <p>61 Automatic advances in a tournament</p> <p>62 Org. of Pepper</p> <p>63 English pool</p> <p>64 Wax stick</p> <p>65 Boisterously</p> <p>66 Irish river</p> <p>67 Cold-cut pelaces</p> <p>68 "My Friend"</p> <p>69 Draft classification</p> <p>70 Male and female</p> <p>71 ODS rival</p> <p>72 Written part</p> <p>73 Travel in water</p> <p>74 Donahue of "Father Knows Best"</p> <p>75 Repair</p> <p>76 Of a resistance unit</p> <p>77 Apple juices</p> <p>78 Ends of wings</p> <p>79 Popularized myth</p> <p>80 Star of "Alfie"</p> <p>81 Wicked</p> <p>82 Mr. Greenspan</p> <p>83 Ooze</p> <p>84 Sandwich holder</p>	<p>65 Of words</p> <p>66 Chin Dynasty</p> <p>67 Banished</p> <p>68 Survives</p> <p>69 Bullets, briefly</p> <p>70 Excavated</p> <p>71 Grand... Opry</p> <p>72 MOX divided by V</p> <p>73 Stupor: pret.</p> <p>74 Marketing starter?</p> <p>75 Burial site of William the Conqueror</p> <p>76 View from the Elburz Mountains</p> <p>77 Marching for inspection</p> <p>78 Medical breads</p> <p>79 Filmed, stangly</p> <p>80 Confederates</p> <p>81 Soldiers, casually</p> <p>82 Get on</p> <p>83 Manoeuvre</p> <p>84 Mortgage condition, often</p> <p>85 Food from heaven</p> <p>86 Head shivers</p> <p>87 Location of "The Last Supper"</p> <p>88 City northwest of Gibraltar</p> <p>89 1st letter</p> <p>90 Town known for its witches</p> <p>91 Silent-films</p> <p>92 Ancient Sarr</p> <p>93 Sea eagle</p> <p>94 Easy get</p> <p>95 Bagnold and others</p> <p>96 More national</p> <p>97 Ramona, by another name</p> <p>98 Wards off</p> <p>99 Ligit</p> <p>100 Reverence</p> <p>101 Automatic advances in a tournament</p> <p>102 Org. of Pepper</p> <p>103 English pool</p> <p>104 Wax stick</p> <p>105 Boisterously</p> <p>106 Irish river</p> <p>107 Cold-cut pelaces</p> <p>108 "My Friend"</p> <p>109 Draft classification</p> <p>110 Male and female</p> <p>111 ODS rival</p> <p>112 Written part</p> <p>113 Travel in water</p> <p>114 Donahue of "Father Knows Best"</p> <p>115 Repair</p> <p>116 Of a resistance unit</p> <p>117 Apple juices</p> <p>118 Ends of wings</p> <p>119 Popularized myth</p> <p>120 Star of "Alfie"</p> <p>121 Wicked</p> <p>122 Mr. Greenspan</p> <p>123 Ooze</p> <p>124 Sandwich holder</p>
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PM: Senators appointed in Cabinet should resign from Upper House

(Continued from page 1)

scheduled to return to Mayo Clinic from Washington in a few days time for another chemotherapy session.

The prime minister said that King Hussein is responding very well to the treatment which will take some time to be completed.

Tarawneh said that he reviewed with the King a number of issues which the government is planning to tackle particularly poverty and unemployment adding

that he briefed King Hussein on the steps the government is determined to take in the course of implementing the Royal Letter of Designation.

Among the other issues which the government will tackle is corruption which Tarawneh said cannot be allowed to take hold in Jordan.

"We cannot allow the term 'corruption' to be linked with Jordan because Jordanian society is clean, but any occasional misconduct which might occur

here and there will be dealt with promptly and firmly," he pointed out.

Tarawneh said: "We are taking action on this matter and we will strike at the source of corruption anywhere regardless of who might be responsible for it; and we are employing an administrative and security mechanism in carrying out our duty but we are not going to be unjust to anyone."

Asked whether he discussed with the King the question of reducing the

bread prices or releasing some convicted prisoners. Tarawneh said he did not take up such questions with King Hussein.

About contacts with the U.S. administration during his trip, Tarawneh said that he met with acting U.S. Secretary of State Thomas Pickering and discussed U.S. aid to Jordan and Washington's influence on other nations to reduce the Kingdom's economic burden.

'Netanyahu may delay new settlement in east Jerusalem'

(Continued from page 1)

up construction of a much larger Jewish housing scheme for several thousand apartments on an east Jerusalem hilltop known as Har Homa to Jews and Jebel Abu Ghneim to Arabs.

His decision to permit infrastructure work at the site in March 1997 sparked the breakdown in peace negotiations with the Palestinians.

Palestinian officials branded the new plan to build for Jews in Ras Al Amud, a neighbourhood of some 11,000 Palestinians, a "dangerous provocation" and demanded Thursday that the U.N. Security Council take "immediate action" to block the project.

The Ras Al Amud plan is being promoted by an ultranationalist religious

movement. Ateret Cohanim, which spearheads efforts to move Jews into Arab parts of annexed Arab east Jerusalem.

When Ateret Cohanim occupied an existing house in Ras Al Amud last year, it sparked violent Palestinian protests.

Israel Radio said the Shin Bet secret service had advised Netanyahu to prevent construction at Ras Al Amud, saying the project would lead to more violence.

The property was purchased several years ago by U.S. millionaire Irving Moskowitz, who finances Ateret Cohanim actions.

Six months ago the interior ministry gave authorisation for Moskowitz's plan to build homes for both Jews and Arabs in the

area, and the municipality gave its final green light around five weeks ago, officials said.

The decision was kept secret at the request of the government in order not to disrupt delicate negotiations with the Palestinians over long-delayed further troop withdrawals from the West Bank, officials said.

But after some optimism that a deal on the withdrawals was near, the talks with the Palestinians stalled again this week and supporters of the Ras Al Amud plan let news of its approval leak out.

Ateret Cohanim officials vowed to press ahead with the project and have begun discussions with the Antiquities Department to organise excavations required before building can take

place on empty land in the city.

Israel occupied east Jerusalem along with the rest of the West Bank from Jordan in the 1967 war and later annexed the area into its capital.

Palestinians want to make Arab east Jerusalem the capital of a state of their own and under the Oslo agreements the future of the city is to be determined in negotiations on a permanent Israeli-Palestinian peace accord.

Netanyahu has however ruled out any re-division of Jerusalem and has backed an aggressive policy of expanding the Jewish presence in Arab east Jerusalem.

Gulf Arabs rescue Jordan's tourism

AMMAN (R) — Jordan's tourist industry, jolted by a rash of spring cancellations over a crisis in neighbouring Iraq, has bounced back with a summer surge of Gulf Arab visitors, Tourism Minister Akel Beltaji said.

Lured by an advertising campaign and an increase in flats available for short-term lets, Gulf Arabs have been flocking to Jordan this year.

"The surge was so positive that by the end of July there was a 36 per cent increase over last year," Beltaji told Reuters in an interview this week.

"This of course is very rewarding, especially as in February, March and April we were very adversely hit by the withdrawal and cancellation of tours from Europe due to the standoff between Iraq and the United Nations," he said.

Tourism is an important source of hard currency in Jordan but has always been sensitive to tensions in neighbouring Iraq or the West Bank. Tourism indus-

try officials put last year's revenue at around \$770 million.

While their governments have been slow to restore ties with Jordan for its perceived pro-Iraq stand in the 1990-91 Gulf crisis, Gulf Arabs still come to Amman every summer to escape the stifling heat and conservatism back home.

Though some are just passing through en route to other destinations, last year they accounted for 52 per cent of tourists in Jordan — and 62 per cent of tourist revenues.

In the first seven months of this year 444,000 Gulf Arab tourists visited Jordan, up from 326,000 in the same period of 1997. That increase more than made up for a 15 per cent fall in European and U.S. tourist arrivals to around 188,000.

A joint state-private sector tourism marketing board established in March had campaigned aggressively in the Gulf states.

Beltaji said its success this year should ensure an

increase in its budget of just 1.5 million dinars (\$2 million) to around seven million dinars next year.

Water pollution and shortages in Amman this summer may have prevented even greater numbers of tourists coming — and cut short the stay of some already in Jordan.

Tourist industry officials said they were hoping for two more good months of Gulf tourism and would then be looking anxiously at the figures for European and U.S. tourists, which usually peak in spring and autumn.

Beltaji hopes to build on this year's rebound to notch 10 per cent growth in tourism from now until 2000, when it will compete with Israel and the Palestinians for an influx of tourists marking the anniversary of Jesus Christ's birth.

Jordan says Jesus was baptised on its side of the Jordan River and has launched a campaign with the theme: "Beyond the Jor-

dan: From Birth to Baptism." Israel hopes to draw tourists to the other side of the Jordan on the occupied West Bank.

"We hope the year 2000 will be a hase and not a peak," Beltaji said, adding that Jordan was also targeting the conference and business market to fill its hotels.

But he said the tourism industry had to work to increase the average number of nights spent by each tourist in Jordan — so far this year tourists have stayed an average of four nights.

Sites like the 2000-year-old Nabatean rock city of Petra would be marketed as a separate destination instead of a day-trip from Amman. The Red Sea port of Aqaba, which has lost out to Israeli and Egyptian resorts, has ambitious regeneration plans and Beltaji said in the long-term Jordan might look at building 10,000 hotel rooms on the Dead Sea.

Turnover at AFM declines by 22.2 per cent

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Although turnover slipped at the Amman Financial Market (AFM), share prices recorded a 0.34 point increase on "selective shares" in the banking and industrial sectors, a broker said Friday.

Naim Nageeh, a broker at the stock market, said the bulk of the trading went to the Housing Bank, the Arab Bank and the Arab Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Company (APMC), amid expectations that this trend will continue this week.

"Expectations are high that these firms will record tangible results in the second half of this year as they did in the first six months," Nageeh told the Jordan Times.

He noted that local and foreign investors bought the Housing Bank's shares while demand for the Arab Bank shares were mainly sought by domestic buyers.

The AFM's weekly bulletin indicated that the general price index, based on 60 major firms, rose by 0.18 per

cent to 182.76 points, up from 182.42 points.

The price index of the banking sector rose by 3.15 points, or 1.06 per cent, while the share prices of industrial, services and insurance sectors slipped by 1.86 points or 0.74 and 0.19 per cent respectively.

The bulletin showed that

AFM's turnover declined to JD5.9 million in the past week compared to JD7.6 million a week ago, a 22.2 per cent drop. The number of shares that changed hands in the market amounted to 3.5 million with an average daily turnover of the organised market's share of the turnover amount-

ed to JD5.5 million while the parallel market received JD879,473.

Out of the 95 firms that changed hands at the AFM, shares of 24 companies recorded increase, 48 firms registered decrease and shares of 23 companies remained unchanged.

REUTERS The Business of Information

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.7900	0.8058	1.4702	143.81	1.5748	1768.30	2.0200	6.0025	3.4275
DE Mark	0.5587	1.0000	0.3379	0.8217	0.8793	987.43	1.1281	3.3325	1.9131
GB Sterling	1.6810	2.9871	1.0000	2.2297	2.3733	2.6008	2920.02	3.3384	9.9131
CH Franc	0.6802	1.2165	0.4112	1.0000	1.0698	1201.40	137.23	4.0788	4.1757
JP Yen	0.0070	1.2463	0.4210	1.0230	1.0000	12.30	140.46	4.1757	4.3265
CA Dollar	0.6380	1.2910	0.4228	1.0588	1.10	1270.80	1.4501	4.3265	3.3916
IT Lira	0.0008	1.0113	0.2419	0.0831	1231.83	0.8898	11.41	3.3916	2.9711
NL Guilder	0.4980	0.862	0.2995	72.85	71.10	0.7794	67.527	11.41	3.3916
FR Franc	0.1665	0.2983	0.1008	24.5127	23.51	0.2823	33.55	33.5500	-

Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar	1.4104	0.7090	3.7650	0.3770	3.6385	0.3070	3.6725	1519.00	3.4275
Jordan Dinar	0.2666	1.0000	0.1883	0.1001	0.87	0.0815	0.98	403.45	0.9104
Saudi Riyal	2.65	1.8809	9.8891	1.0348	9.65	0.8144	9.74	4029.71	0.9027
Bahrain Dinar	0.2748	0.1949	1.0348	1.0348	0.8844	1.01	417.43	0.9420	0.9420
Kuwait Dinar	3.2573	2.3094	12.2638	1.2279	11.85	11.96	4947.88	0.9420	0.9420
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1931	1.0262	1.0262	0.8907	0.0836	413.61	0.9333	0.9333
Lebanese/1000	0.65	0.4688	2.4786	0.2482	2.3953	0.2321	2.4177	2.2564	-
Egyptian	0.2918	0.2069	1.0885	0.1100	1.0616	0.0895	1.0715	443.18	-

Energy	Offs	Last	Revised
Brent	0.00	0.00	0.00
WTI	13.31	13.63	13.63
Bonny	0.00	0.00	0.00
Dubai	12.09	12.53	12.53
UL Gas	130.00	130.00	130.00

Period	-1	-3	-6	-12
Month	Month	Month	Month	Year
USD	5.6445	6.6250	5.5938	6.5313
GBP	7.5547	7.6250	7.5742	7.3750
JPY	0.8602	0.8328	0.8367	0.8367
DEM	3.4688	3.5000	3.5938	3.5938
FRF	3.5000	1.6133	1.6933	1.8164
CHF	1.5703	3.5566	3.5938	3.6870
ITL	5.2120	5.1460	4.7471	-

Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	P/Cts
New York	DOW JONES	8191.23	25.24	0.31	8244.02	8168.01	8165.99
New York	S&P 500	1046.46	3.87	0.37	1051.8	1042.16	1042.09
London	FT-SE 100	0	0	0	0	0	5368.5
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	13916.63	-498.18	-3.46	14289.2	13792.8	14413.8
Paris	CAC 40	3757.29	11.60	0.31	3777.01	3684.26	3745.64
Frankfurt	DAX	4997.04	-63.8	-1.26	5017.38	4752.4	5060.84

Commodity	Last	Delivery
Coffee (\$/lb)	118.08	Spot
Cocoa (\$/lb)	1991	Spot
Sugar (\$/ton)	234	Spot
Wheat (\$/ton)	0	Spot
Soy (\$/lb)	23.93	Spot
Tea (\$/kg)	125	Spot
Barley (\$/bush)	0	Spot
Rice (\$/ton)	410	Spot

Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1600	1.1653
DE Mark	0.3917	0.3937
CH Franc	0.4701	0.4725
FR Franc	0.1169	0.1170
JP Yen	0.4931	0.4956
NL Guilder	0.3474	0.3491
IT Lira	0.357	0.359

Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

Global market tensions reign as Russia rages

LONDON (R) — Global financial turmoil showed no sign of abating on Friday as Russia's economic nightmare and fears of a worldwide recession haunted investors.

Wall Street succumbed once again to selling pressure, confounding investor hopes of a rebound after what has been one of the most difficult trading weeks in modern memory.

In a market beset by wild rumours and volatile price swings, there was speculation the United States might ultimately have to cut interest rates to ease the strains that are hitting markets and economies everywhere.

"This is the most dangerous world crisis since the oil shocks of the 1970s," said HSBC Group chief economist Roger Bootle in London. "For the first time in my professional life the chances of a 1930s-style slump have to be taken seriously."

Top grade bond markets remained the main refuge for frazzled investors. The yield on the U.S. 30-year

long bond — seen as the ultimate long-term safe haven — set a record low for the second successive day, falling to 5.30 per cent.

"World markets are in deep trouble," Dutch banking giant ABN Amro said. "Equity markets have become vulnerable on a global scale. The domino effect is likely to be very strong, increasing the chance of major currency realignments."

Commodity prices remained under severe pressure, feeding economists' fears of deflation, a hallmark of the world economic depression in the 1930s.

Latin American countries are heavily dependent on commodity exports and the currencies and economies of this region are under some of the most intense strain.

World leaders are so alarmed by the situation in Moscow — where economic and political disarray seems to intensify almost by the hour — that members of the Group of Seven (G-7) leading industrial

countries have written to Russia urging the government to take action.

French Finance Minister Dominique Strauss-Kahn, who on Friday disclosed that the European members of the G-7 had written to acting Russian Premier Viktor Chomyrdin, said the solution lay with Russia.

He said G-7 assistance was necessary but Russia had to rapidly enact a sweeping economic restructuring. He singled out tax collection, a long-standing problem for Russia, as key.

The line from Washington is that G-7 nations are working together to address the volatility that has engulfed world markets.

U.S. President Bill Clinton is due next week to meet Russian President Boris Yeltsin. But many both inside and outside of Moscow are now questioning the political survival of the man who for seven years has tried to steer Russia towards a free-market, Western style economy.

In any case, most bankers believe the world authorities may be powerless, at least in the short-term. Analysts are telling clients to steer clear of any assets that smack of the slightest risk. "Never catch a falling knife," one Swiss bank

advised customers.

Sentiment over Russia received another knock after the reported dismissal of Russia's top debt negotiator, Anatoly Chubais. The RIA news agency said Yeltsin had sacked Chubais, a long-time campaigner for economic reform, but gave no further details.

The Dow Jones industrial average opened stronger but later wilted, falling around 100 points to 8065 by 1530 GMT. It fell four per cent on Thursday.

Investors remain concerned about the potential for sharp swings and the overriding fear is that a vicious cycle ensues, where selling pressure in each major centre spills over to the next.

U.S. Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan did little to encourage the speculation over U.S. interest rates. In a speech in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, he spoke of the long-term need for price stability. But he made no reference to what everyone in the market wanted to know about — the state of world markets and U.S. policy.

Equity markets throughout Europe stayed weak. Germany's DAX index of leading shares, after falling as much as five per cent earlier on Friday, recovered but was still down nearly

two per cent as U.S. trading got underway.

The FTSE 100 index of British blue chip stocks closed down 119.1 points, 2.2 per cent, to a seven-month closing low.

In Tokyo share prices fell nearly 3.5 per cent to their lowest levels in more than 12 years. The Nikkei lost 498.16 points to finish at 13,915.63.

But the Japanese yen was holding up well. Worries about Japan's own economic mess had been a constant theme in most of the market flareups earlier this year.

One bank said that investors who were loaded up on dollars — after the dollar rose to eight-year highs of 147.50 yen earlier this month — were selling the U.S. currency to raise cash for margin calls in other markets where they had suffered losses.

The dollar was trading around 143.50 yen, after the Japanese currency had earlier strengthened to 140.35 per U.S. dollar.

Several emerging market currencies remained in the firing line. The Polish zloty weakened sharply. The South African rand, which on Friday fell to a new record low, stabilised as the local central bank raised interest rates. Dealers said worries continued that the Brazilian real, the Mexican

(Continued on page 9)

DEUTSCHER ERGAENZUNGSUNTERRICHT
IM GOETHE INSTITUT
Anmeldung fuer 1998/99 am Mo., 31.08.
von 16:00-17:00 Uhr im Garten des Instituts
Unterrichtsbeginn Mo., 07.09.1998
C.Naber Tel.: 5686614, ab 16:00 Uhr

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THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

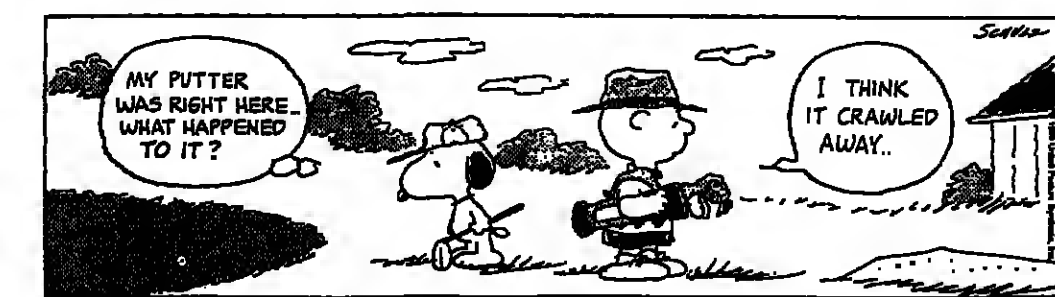
ACROSS

- Italian island
- Unadorned
- Permission slip
- Checked garment?
- "Casablanca" co-star Peter
- One on one's side
- Encase
- Explanatory note
- Procedure
- Faustian lord
- Wedding-vow sentence
- Natural satellite
- Spoiled kids
- Beginning
- Birthday figure
- Credence
- Cleanwater
- Renewed hit
- Web meless
- Particle
- Start of a sphere?
- "The King"
- Quick meal
- Murder
- LSO guru
- Way out
- Do wrong
- Cameron and
- Douglas
- Cloutless
- Actor Guinness
- And so forth, briefly
- Evaluator
- Worship
- Abandoning one's country
- "Riot"
- playwright
- Pollution problem
- Alcoholic beverages
- Kans. neighbor
- Theatrical
- Church areas
- No. in Russia

DOWN

- Part of a bow
- Staring place
- Piece of history
- Kidnapping
- John or Deborah
- RR stop
- Having long
- Sea eagles
- Take five
- Bullets, briefly
- Resting on
- God of
- Guadalajara
- Slow flow
- Very black
- Eye coverously
- Ordinary
- Lawyers' grp.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

NAIPO

ZENOO

RUSTEY

TULNAW

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: FOR A

Yesterday's Jumbles: GAVEL POKED STYMIE SPRUCE
Answer: This can give a computer operator a headache — A PESKY VIRUS

28/08/98 16:59

MLG	FRF
30 2.0200	6.0325
31 1.1281	3.3525
32 3.3354	9.9131
40 137.23	4.0786
48 140.48	6.1757
80 1.4581	4.3265
114.41	3.2916
27 -	2.9711
35 33.8500	-

BP CHF JPY

6084	0.39084	28.141
6408	0.40067	59.145
7299	4.79388	468.185
30643	3.9032	281.358
148	2.792	272.78

High Low P/Cls

1051.8	1042.15	1042.59
0	0	526.8
14289.2	12792.2	14413.5
3777.61	3554.26	3745.84
8017.28	4782.4	8263.84

	Buy	Sell
ollar	0.705	0.710
ollar	1.1505	1.1663
ollar	0.2817	0.2877
ollar	0.4701	0.4725
ollar	0.1159	0.1175
ollar	0.4821	0.4856
ollar	0.5474	0.5491
ollar	0.357	0.359

Central Bank of Jordan

By Glasbergen



anetic engineering
ake carrots with
reme filling?

AT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
by Hani Amal and Hani Amal



WHAT THE CASE
CAR DRIVER
AT THE CLINIC

Now arrived the 1st case
from the 5th case and the 3rd case
described by the 2nd case.

FOR A
POKED 57 ME
one a complete 1st case
A PEEKY 1st case

Business & Finance

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Mismanagement of public funds diagnosed as main economic illness by former health minister

** ACCORDING TO Zaid Hamzeh, a former minister of health, "our problem is not in the weak resources that finance the budget but in the mismanagement of public funds." Commenting on the subject of spending priorities in the 1999 budget, Hamzeh said: "We need a comprehensive review to our government's financial regulations and a reconsideration of the way the general budget is prepared."

Hamzeh indicated that there are old shortcomings in the regulations and deficiencies in the preparation of the general budget. "The deficiencies are repeated year after year and no official dares to come forward and try to remedy the situation," he said. "It goes without saying that the necessary funds be allocated for the projects that are most needed and then for the projects that are less important and, finally, those that are not pressing," the former minister added.

"It goes without saying also that there

should be a general financial policy decided by the government before entering into the details of spending and allocating the necessary funds for each section of the budget," Hamzeh stressed. He emphasized that this general policy should be subject to change every year if the circumstances warrant and that it should be flexible as well as fundamental and not merely a slogan "to ensure that the budget does not turn into a holy cow that should not be touched or be close to."

He said that Jordan is a poor country and noted that the people are financially burdened by taxes of all sorts and, in order to get rid of outside loans, a budget without deficit should be worked out. "Regrettably, every few weeks the minister of planning appears on television and in newspapers celebrating the signing of a new foreign loan," Hamzeh added. He concluded by stressing that the financial reform is possible if the reformists and sincere people can be found (Al Aswaj).

Traffic accidents caused JD100 million in material damages between 1992-1997

** ADNAN SHAMAILEH, the director of the Central Traffic Directorate, expects the costs of accidents in the Kingdom to reach about JD150 million in the year 2000. In a lecture he delivered recently, he said that the problems of accidents in Jordan has gone out of proportion due to the absence of future planning to the cities or to the roads network. He added that there has not been any futuristic view to take into consideration the expected increase in population and number of vehicles.

Shamaileh indicated that in 1997, more than 20,000 accidents, or 68 per cent of the total number of accidents, resulted in material damages only. He estimated the losses resulting from traffic accidents between 1992 and 1997 at JD100 million. Noting that such an amount puts a big burden on the national economy, he said that if half of the amount was spent on making pedestrian crossings, rehabilitation of drivers and awareness programmes some JD50 million could have been saved from the (cost) of these losses (Al Aswaj).

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, AUGUST 29, 1998

By C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

Aug 21 to April 19) You're busy, but not stressed. There's been an emphasis on work and a lot of money could come in. You'll be a great opportunity, although you're being tired of it by now. The condition is in work and at home, so you could be low on energy.

Aug 21 to May 20) People will be racing this weekend, trying to get things done. You have to join the frenzy. You and your sweetheart find a quiet place to hide and let the rest of the world go by. It might not be your home. It looks like too much going on there to hear yourself think.

Aug 21 to June 21) The sun is in Virgo and the moon is in Scorpio, going into Sagittarius. This is a rather hectic weekend. There's lots of changeable signs, meaning quick action is required. It's a good time to play games that require dexterity — yours should be excellent. Tennis, basketball, football.

Aug 22 to July 21) You have work to do. Saturday because you should be in the mood for it. An excellent weekend for a garage sale, not coincidentally. Work and money are always linked, but this is an especially nice configuration for you right now. If you can think of something to do, by all means, do it.

Aug 22 to August 21) There are all sorts of change, wonderful and unusual things going on. The apparent problem is a lack of money. Looks like some of the games you'd like to play are out of your price range, but that's okay. It gives you something to work toward.

Aug 22 to September 22) This is a great time to stay home and have company. People could drop by whenever you invite them or not, so you might as well plan ahead. You like to be surprised, but even more so if you're prepared for it. Get the vacuuming done as early as possible.

Aug 23 to October 22) It looks like you're being asked to clean the garage or something. That's a bad idea, especially if you friends help. It's more fun doing something like this with a team. Doing something more fun it's done with a group. Go ahead and enjoy yourself, but don't forget to get the job done.

Aug 23 to November 21) It'll be difficult to get what you want, but still possible. Odds are you'll receive money from an unexpected source. You've been working hard, you did a long time ago or you've been waiting for it in years. At any rate, you've reached your objective. You've defied the odds.

Aug 23 to December 21) The odds are in your favor for dealing with a pernicious person. You want to make you perfect. You'll have a great time if it will continue to happen the way it is.

Aug 23 to January 20) There's a chance you'll be starting to get to you. You'd better be ready. In fact, you may have a clear plan of how to accomplish. If there's anything you want to do, expect it to happen. It should be a success.

Aug 21 to February 19) Thank heaven, it's a weekend! You get the prize just for surviving the obstacle course. The good news is that you have enough money to do anything expensive. Not to worry. It's going to be more fun than you initially. Besides, it'll be wonderful to get out of the way.

Aug 20 to March 20) An older person is looking for attention and possibly your strong back. It's not things that need to be done and you don't want to worry. It's going to be more fun than you initially. Besides, it'll be wonderful to get out of the way.

Aug 20 to August: Peridot — Golden Quartz

Global market tensions reign as Russia rages

(Continued from page 8)

peso and the Venezuelan bolivar were all in jeopardy. On the commodity front, gold prices sank even further. Major producers were said to be dumping gold, and with the global threat of inflation now seen as negligible it has lost much of its attraction as a traditional hedge against inflation. Gold was fixed at \$273.40 an ounce, the lowest since May 1979.

Economists say the U.S. stock market will hold the key. If that suffers fresh, sharp setbacks, consumer confidence will take a hit and one of the few remaining props for the world economy could be knocked away.

Estimates are that as much as 60 per cent of U.S. household wealth is tied up in the stock market.

At the very least, analysis say world economic growth will be dragged down further. "The bottom to the global slowdown is nowhere in sight," said Bruce Kasman, head of European research at J.P. Morgan.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - JORDAN
WEEKLY REPORT
ORGANIZED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (32/08/1998 - 36/08/1998)



DURING THE LAST 3 WEEKS	COMPANY NAME	P/E	DIV	NO. OF CONTRACTS	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPENING PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE	AVERAGE PRICE	TURNOVER	NO. OF TRADING DAYS
557.000	217.500 ARAB BANK	18.7	0.08	113	2460	405599	236.00	330.00	228.00	228.50	+ 2.50	229.394	0.030	5
1.660	1.450 JOR. NATIONAL BK.	12.5	4.52	53	158415	280551	1.55	1.68	1.65	1.66	-	1.665	401	5
1.100	1.120 BANK OF JORDAN	-	0.00	27	7336	8093	1.14	1.33	1.11	1.12	-	1.120	054	6
1.040	1.950 MID-EAST INV. BK.	45.7	0.00	9	13000	13060	1.01	1.01	1.00	1.00	-	1.005	130	2
1.590	1.550 INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	11.1	5.54	25	15555	24534	1.58	1.59	1.58	1.58	-	1.580	065	5
5.190	3.040 THE HOUSING BK.	30.1	3.15	224	779445	242614	2.10	2.20	2.05	2.17	+ 0.07	2.119	779	5
1.040	1.830 JOR. REALTY BANK	-	0.00	17	1870	2406	1.85	1.84	1.83	1.82	-	1.820	012	4
1.630	350 JOR. GULF BANK	-	0.00	5	3200	1920	40	40	40	40	-	40	016	3
3.750	1.700 JOR. LEASING BANK	17.8	0.00	37	15708	27359	1.78	1.78	1.73	1.74	-	1.743	071	5
1.580	1.530 JOR. INV. FID. BANK	53.7	3.55	24	6704	10349	1.54	1.54	1.54	1.54	-	1.544	034	5
0.820	0.790 BETH-AL-HAL (BETHMA)	5.8	0.00	4	1600	772	79	78	76	78	-	772	050	3
1.170	0.770 PHILADELPH. INV. BK.	955.1	0.00	48	552349	339378	77	72	60	50	-	51.5	5523	5

S A S S	S E C T O R				587	1567083	3739234	INDEX NUMBER	+ 300.90	CHANGE	+ 1.04%			
2.950	2.930 JORDAN INSURANCE	12.9	5.00	1	500	1500	2.95	2.90	3.00	3.00	+ .05	3.000	-0.10	1
1.850	1.850 ARABIAN SEAS TRADING	51.1	0.00	5	400	264	.85	.93	.89	.93	+ .08	.930	070	5
2.550	2.250 GENERAL ARAB INSUR.	23.4	3.76	2	540	1199	2.25	2.14	2.16	2.16	- .11	2.139	-0.28	1
1.550	1.400 JERUSALEM INSUR.	9.6	5.80	6	2100	2918	1.45	1.50	1.28	1.38	- .07	1.390	078	3
2.850	2.640 JOR FRENCH INSUR.	7.5	9.29	7	1800	4957	5.78	2.77	2.69	2.69	- .09	2.759	082	2
1.110	1.100 HOLY LAND INSUR.	8.4	0.00	6	227	251	1.11	1.12	1.12	1.12	- .01	1.106	-0.11	2
1.930	1.900 ARAB LIFE TRADING	9.3	0.00	2	1550	2007	1.90	1.94	1.95	1.95	+ .04	1.940	059	1

1.930	1.900 ARAB INTL. INVE.	9.3	0.00	2	1550	2067	1.90	1.90	1.90	1.90	1.90	1.90	1.90	1.90	1.90
2ND QUARTER SECTOR															
				22	7137	14205	INDEX NUMBER	127.51	CHANGE - 0.15%						
1.550	1.520 JOR. ELECTRIC FWR.	9.9	5.39	52	32896	50245	1.55	1.56	1.52	1.55	-	1.528	-0.14	5	
5.600	2.340 ORBIT ELECTRICITY	15.1	4.08	19	2142	5577	2.56	2.70	2.43	2.45	-	2.604	-0.71	5	
.920	.880 RAYL. PORTFOLIO	33.9	0.00	69	70800	59455	.98	.98	.92	.95	-	.940	-1.415	5	
.800	.740 REAL ESTATE INV.	15.1	0.00	7	1365	1015	75	72	72	72	-	75.0	-0.14	4	
.340	.330 JORDAN INTL. TRAD.	-	0.00	5	1750	540	33	32	32	32	-	32.0	-0.51	5	
.800	.790 JORDAN	8.4	7.14	1	100	550	5.70	5.60	5.60	5.50	-	5.600	-0.03	1	
1.100	1.100 REP. EAST HOTELS	213.8	0.00	50	8104	8958	1.10	1.11	1.10	1.11	-	1.102	-0.147	3	
2.020	1.980 ARAB EDUCATION	9.9	2.00	20	25054	50158	2.00	2.02	2.00	2.00	-	2.002	-0.124	5	
0.960	0.900 ARAB EDUCATION	20.5	0.00	15	15100	11797	90	91	89	89	-	90.1	-0.52	5	
1.520	1.190 UNIFIED CO.	5.7	10.28	57	18950	20925	1.19	1.17	1.07	1.07	-	1.102	-0.79	5	
1.170	1.080 UNIFIED FOR FINANCIAL	1.5	5.59	1	1150	1323	1.17	1.15	1.15	1.15	-	1.150	-0.58	1	

1.100	1.100 MID. EAST HOTELS	213.8	0.00	50	8104	8958	1.10	1.12	1.10	1.11	+ .01	1.102	.147	3
2.070	1.880 ARAB INT'L INV. EDUC.	9.9	2.00	20	25056	50158	2.00	2.01	2.00	2.00	-	2.002	.124	5
.960	.908 KARSA EDUCATION	20.0	0.00	15	15100	11797	.90	.91	.89	.89	-	.901	.552	5
1.500	1.190 UNIFIED CO.	5.7	10.28	57	18950	20935	1.19	1.17	1.07	1.07	- .12	1.014	.379	5
1.270	1.080 UNITED FOR FINAN. INV.	1.5	5.99	1	1150	1323	1.17	1.15	1.15	1.15	- .02	1.150	.058	1
S E C T O R				248	175411	210541	INDEX NUMBER = 110.05				CHANGE = 0.57%			
1.100	1.100 ATTACHEES	-	0.00	4	5070	5574	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	-	1.099	.101	2

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Sports

Davenport moves to showdown with Graf

NEW HAVEN (AFP) — Top seed Lindsay Davenport will play Steffi Graf in the semi-finals of the Pilot Pen International after beating Germany's Anke Huber 6-3, 6-3 here Thursday.

Fourth seeded Graf overwhelmed seventh seed Amanda Coetzer of South Africa 6-3, 6-0.

The other semi-final pits second seed Jana Novotna against Julie Halard-Decugis of France. The Czech avenged her German Open defeat by Amelie Mauresmo, also of France, winning 6-1, 7-6 (7/4), while Halard-Decugis beat American Mary Joe Fernandez 7-5, 6-1.

Davenport resisted a spirited challenge from Huber after claiming the first set in which only three games went with serve. In the second set, Huber reduced her errors and Davenport began to mis-hit her forehand to allow Huber into the match.

Huber ran well and mixed up her shots to keep Davenport busy, but the American earned the only break to lead 5-3 when Huber sent a forehand flying long. Davenport then held off a break point in the next game before claiming victory.

"It wasn't a perfect match, but it was good," said Davenport, who received a first round bye and second round walkover. "She's a tough player and takes the ball early, and she doesn't give you much time to set up and hit your shots."

Graf and Coetzer began as if they were playing on a clay court, with long baseline exchanges. Coetzer, who had beaten Graf in three of their last four meetings, took the first break to lead 3-2, but that only spurred Graf into becoming more aggressive.



Amanda Coetzer of South Africa takes aim at the ball during her quarter-final singles match against Steffi Graf of Germany in the Pilot Pen International in New Haven. Cf. Graf eliminated Coetzer 6-3, 6-0 (AP photo)

The German then took the next four games and the set, and the longer the match went on the better she played. Graf's forehand always kept Coetzer on the defensive, and her steady backhand and swiftness around the court demonstrated that she is not far from regaining her top form.

"I've played better since I came back, but not against someone so highly ranked,"

said Graf. "I didn't make many mistakes. The beginning was a wailing game and maybe I was a little tentative on some shots, but from 3-2 I played a little deeper and felt much better. 'I didn't try for anything crazy. I was trying to find a rhythm and I did that very well.'"

Novotna is seeking her fourth title in five tournaments. In June she won her first career grass court title

at Eastbourne, and in July she won Wimbledon and immediately followed that with a clay court title in Prague. Last week she was beaten in the semi-finals of the Canadian Open by Arantxa Sanchez Vicario after a month's vacation. Halard-Decugis took 74 minutes to win the first set from Fernandez, and just 35 minutes to win the second as the challenge from the American collapsed.

Champions League United, Barcelona, Munich and Brondby drawn in Group of Death

MONTE CARLO (AFP) — Manchester United, Barcelona, Bayern Munich and Brondby were drawn into a European Champions League "Group of Death" here on Thursday.

The 24 teams were drawn into six groups of four with fixtures beginning on September 16.

United are looking for their first European title since becoming the first English club to win the event in 1968, but are paying the price of only coming second in the Premiership.

Bayern Munich are another one of Europe's top sides which have not won the European title for ages — 22 years to be exact — and they will have their work cut out in Group D. Barcelona had a miserable time in last year's competition, failing to qualify from their group, but they did win the Spanish League and Cup to keep the Catalan crowds happy.

Denmark's Brondby, who have included English League and FA Cup champions Arsenal among their victims in recent seasons, will probably meet their former keeper in United's Peter Schmeichel.

Manchester United chairman Martin Edwards

Group A
Ajax (Ned)
Porto (Por)
Olympiakos (Gre)
Croatia Zagreb (Cro)

Group B
Juventus (Ita)
Athletic Bilbao (Spa)
Ros. Trondheim (Nor)
Galatasaray (Tur)

Group C
Real Madrid (Spa)
Inter Milan (Ita)
Sturm Graz (Aut)
Spartak Moscow (Rus)

Group D
Barcelona (Spa)
Bayern Munich (Ger)
Manchester United (Engl)
Brondby (Dan)

Group E
Lens (Fra)
Arsenal (Eng)
Panathinaikos (Gre)
Dynamo Kiev (Ukr)

Group F
Kaiserslautern (Ger)
PSV Eindhoven (Ned)
Benfica (Por)
HJK Helsinki (Fin)

who feature several players who helped Croatia to third place in the World Cup finals.

Juventus, runners-up for the last two seasons, look to have one foot in the quarter-finals with Athletic Bilbao, Rosenborg Trondheim and Galatasaray as opponents in Group B.

Group C sees the defending champions Real Madrid facing Ronaldo's Inter Milan along with Austrian club Sturm Graz and Russia's Spartak Moscow.

Group E is an unhappy draw for England's Arsenal. Dutch striker Dennis Bergkamp never flies and coach Arsene Wenger knows he will only go to places easily reachable.

Greek side Panathinaikos and Ukraine's Dynamo Kiev are surely too far to reach by rail, sea or road, though French champions Lens are an easy trip from north London.

An evenly-balanced Group F features German champions Kaiserslautern, Dutch side PSV Eindhoven, Portugal's Benfica and surprise qualifiers HJK Helsinki of Finland, who advanced at the expense of French club Metz.

admits they have a score to settle, although he also pointed out that they did beat Barcelona in the European Cup Winners' Cup in 1991 and 1984.

"We have quite a history with Barcelona," he said. "We have beaten them and they have beaten us so those two games should be interesting."

"We will want to avenge that 4-0 defeat from the last time we met. But we have had our successes against them too, and we beat them in the final of the European Cup Winners' Cup in 1991 while we also overcame a 2-0 deficit to beat them 3-2 on aggregate in the same competition in the 1980s."

Wenger said: "It's a well-balanced draw for us. There are some positives and some negatives but I think all four teams will consider they have a chance to go through."

Lens coach Daniel Lecercq said: "We will go into the matches without any worries. We are capable of beating any team and of losing to anyone so we'll just take each match as it comes."

The 1995 champions Ajax meet Porto and Olympiakos in Group A but also face surely the toughest of the lowest-seeded clubs in Croatia Zagreb.

King sends good wishes Karam wins Ruman Hill race

By Randa Naffa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Lebanese car driver Nabil (Billy) Karam drove his Lancia Delta Integrale to victory as he topped 48 competitors at the Ruman Hill Climb to claim both titles for the single and total time recorded over three stages.

Karam registered 1 minute 59.03 seconds in the first round and came back in the second round with a time of 1:58.06 to advance to the ten finalists stage and record his victory time with 1:58.76.

This record, however, was still shy of the 1:57.28 set by His Majesty King Hussein in 1996.

The second place single and overall title were won by UAE's Michel Saleh in his Toyota Celica GT4 who clocked 2:01.90 in the first stage and 2:01.58 in the second stage and 2:02.85 in the third and final stage.

Rogeh Faghali from Lebanon took the third place in his BMW 320, after he fell 3.35 seconds short of Saleh's total time.

Jordanian drivers faced tough competition against top level drivers from the Arab World.

But, National Ruman Qualifying champion Ahmad Daoud, racing in two cars, achieved sixth place in the Ford Escort Cosworth 4x4 and seventh place in the Mitsubishi Lancer Evo 3 breaking his May record with 2:10.60 in the second stage and 2:11.10 in the third stage.

His brother Mohammad



First among Jordanians, Ahmad Daoud in his Ford Escort

came in eighth with the same Ford Escort as Ahmad.

The event was held under the patronage of His Royal Highness Prince Faisal, who attended the race, and cheered on the Jordanian competitors.

Prince Faisal told the press on the side of the race that he had a telephone call earlier with His Majesty the King who wished the Jordanian drivers all the best and hoped for the success of the race.

The King who is in the U.S. undergoing chemotherapy, first initiated the Ruman Hill Climb in 1956 and drove the path to the record of 2:02.42 in 1989 and to break it in 1996 with a time of 1:57.28.

Jordan's Maya Mufti broke the women's record gaining the

best timing the second round with 2:23.01.

Maya, was the only women participant and took the 22nd place in her Triumph TR8.

Inspired by her father, Hisham Mufti, a former racer in the competition, and taking advantage of skills learned during her last participation in Lebanon's Rally du Printemps, Maya set a victory for Jordanian women racers.

The full day event, which was sponsored by the Royal Automobile Club of Jordan (RACJ) and is considered one of the most popular races in the Kingdom, saw a large turnout with fans routing on their favourite drivers.

The Lebanese team was cheered by their own fan, Joelle

Behlok, the reigning Miss Lebanon.

Behlok during the race told the Jordan Times "I intend to send a message to the people to control their speed and drive safely."

"For those who wish to speed, I ask them to participate in racing where the speed is regulated and where they can enjoy the sport," she said.

The hill climb, which takes place 17 km north of Amman just off the Jerash highway, is a favourite among sports fans who are offered a chance every year to witness a top level race in one of the most scenic parts of Jordan.

Prince Faisal presented awards to the winners late Friday at a special ceremony.

Barthez returns for Monaco

PARIS (AFP) — Fabien Barthez looks set to return for French league title challengers Monaco at the weekend after early training on Thursday showed no signs of his being hampered by an upper left thigh injury.

Barthez left the field late in the second half of Monaco's 4-1 win over promoted Sochaux on August 15 and has not played competitively since.

His possible comeback at Lyon on Saturday is good news for both his club and world champions France as he missed the 2-2 draw with Austria eight days ago.

France play their first competitive match since winning the World Cup on home soil in Iceland on September 5 and Barthez's availability will be a major boost to coach Roger Lemerre.

Fellow World Cup winner David Trezeguet has a clean bill of health following his calf problems to strengthen the Monaco attack.

Roland Courbis, the coach of table-toppers Marseille, has kept faith with Stephane Porato in goal at the expense of former German national keeper Andreas Kopke for the game at Le Havre.

Courbis publicly stated the fielding of Porato in goal was an experiment, and said Kopke could soon be back. But Porato's continued use could spell the end of Kopke, who has retired from international football, as the number one at the Stade Velodrome.

Marseille, meanwhile, have set a French league record with 39,909 season ticket holders for the 1998/99 season, according to club officials.

Bordeaux, the only other teams with three wins from three matches, travel to dispirited Metz with injured pair Kodjo Afanou and Francois Grenet still out of the reckoning.

Bayern Munich will drop several divi-

sions Sunday when they take on the amateurs of LR Achen in the first round of the German Cup.

Bayern qualified for the 'Champions' League on Wednesday with a 1-1 draw at Yugoslav champions Obilic Belgrade, and will face Manchester United, Barcelona and Brondby in their group.

Mario Basler and Markus Babel, who were unavailable for the midweek tie against Obilic, are set to play but Mehmet Scholl is still out with a back injury.

The last time Scholl played was in last season's German Cup final in May, when Bayern defeated Duisburg 2-1 after a late Basler goal.

"Achen are a very ambitious team, they want to win promotion to Germany's professional ranks," Bayern co-coach Michael Henke said. "They have been talking about nothing but Bayern for weeks now and want to cause an upset."

Otto Rehhagel's Bundesliga champions Kaiserslautern travel to Fortuna Cologne on Sunday. Cologne are under the managerial control of former German international goalkeeper Toni Schumacher.

Fortuna opened the new second division season strongly but have lost their last two games — in contrast to Kaiserslautern who have full points from their opening two Bundesliga games.

With Real Madrid and Barcelona again expected to be the dominant forces in the Spanish League, the championship may well be decided by a duel between Dutch coaches.

Luis van Gaal begins his second season in charge of champions Barcelona, while Guus Hiddink succeeds Jupp Heynckes in charge of European champions Real Madrid.

Competition between the pair is likely to

be fierce, with neither club prepared to accept second best.

Hiddink, the former Dutch national team coach, admits: "Real Madrid are champions of Europe and the fans will expect me to maintain that level."

Hiddink, who coached Valencia between 1991 and 1994, knows all about the cut-throat world of Spanish football and speaks the language fluently.

Jose Antonio Camacho was initially appointed Real coach after Gertjan Heynckes was axed, but he lasted only 22 days before walking out.

Hiddink takes over a team of talents assembled from around the world. Along with Spanish World Cup squad members like Raul, Fernando Hierro and Fernando Morientes, his squad also features names like Brazil's Roberto Carlos, Yugoslav ace Predrag Mijatovic, Frenchman Christian Karembeu, Dutch midfielder Clarence Seedorf and Croatian striker Davor Suker — the leading scorer at the World Cup finals but who was not able to win a starting role last season.

Suker is joined this season by his World Cup teammate Robert Jarni.

Real Madrid open their domestic season with what should prove a gentle stroll against newly-promoted Villareal on Monday night.

Van Gaal led Barcelona to a league and cup double last season, but the fans remain dissatisfied with him, arguing he has imported too many Dutch players at the expense of native Catalan talent. Philippe Cocu and Boudewijn Zenden are the big-name new arrivals from Holland.

Barcelona open their league campaign away to Racing Santander.

Surprise leaders Charlton target Gunners

LONDON (AFP) — English Premiership newcomers Charlton Athletic will have the chance to prove they are for the first time when they face defending champions Arsenal at Highbury on Saturday.

The south London club, odds-on favourite at the start of the campaign to make an instant return to the first division, are the surprise leaders of the early season table.

In their first two matches, they have thrashed Southampton 5-0 and held Newcastle to a goalless draw despite being reduced to 10 men for most of the match.

But it has been the confidence of their performances on their return to the top flight rather than the results themselves that have confounded the critics.

Southampton, who strengthened their squad with eight new players over the summer, have been tipped as possible candidates for a UEFA Cup place.

But in Charlton's first match at their Valley stadium since 1957 — they were homeless when they last played in the top

flight between 1986 and 1990 — they outplayed the Saints in every department as Clive Mendonca grabbed the first hat-trick of the season.

Charlton boss Alan Curtisley, however, has warned his players about the dangers of over-confidence as they prepare for back-to-back clashes with English superpowers Arsenal and Liverpool. "I can hardly believe it," said Curtisley. "It's a great start to the season to take four points from two games. I am not going to get carried away because Crystal Palace made a great start last year and still got relegated."

"It's early on and the acid test is our next two games against Arsenal and Liverpool which, somehow, I don't think will be as easy."

The Valiants face an Arsenal side who have also taken four points from two games following a 2-1 win over Nottingham Forest and a goalless draw at Liverpool.

And if there is a good time for Charlton to be playing the league and FA Cup double win-

ners, it is now when Arsene Wenger's star-studded squad are still searching for their sharpness after the World Cup.

Wenger fears star player Dennis Bergkamp, English football's player-of-the-season last year, is suffering from World Cup burn-out.

Wenger said: "Dennis Bergkamp is not at his best at

the moment. He knows that, but it is mainly physically, because he only started training on August 1.

"He's not as sharp as he used to be, but that is a question of time. For us it is important to get our players slowly back to full fitness without us dropping too many points."

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Yeltsin: I'm not going to resign

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin vehemently denied Friday that he would resign and promised to serve out the rest of his term as president — until new elections in 2000.

"I want to say that I'm not going anywhere. I'm not going to resign. I will work as I'm supposed to for my constitutional term," he said in an interview on national television. "In 2000 there will be an election for a new president and I will not run."

It was the first time Yeltsin had addressed the nation during the current political and economic crisis and came after days of feverish speculation that he would resign. Looking calm and relaxed, Yeltsin said he had no intention of giving up power and was doing everything he could to fix the economy and restore stability.

Yeltsin conducted a series of high-profile meetings Friday in an attempt to show he was still in control in the Kremlin as his aides and political allies insisted that the president would stay in office. The president had not been seen in public since Tuesday, stoking rumours that he was considering stepping down or had been incapacitated.

Meanwhile, Yeltsin's aide

and hard-line lawmakers horse-traded over terms of a rescue package designed to end the crisis by curbing some of Russia's free-market reforms.

Acting Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin accepted a package of Soviet-era economic measures, which parliamentary leaders proposed as a condition for confirming his appointment. The leaders called a special session of the State Duma for Monday to consider the confirmation.

"We must forget ambitions, we must stabilise the situation and ease tension that reached a critical point," Chernomyrdin told reporters.

In an apparent concession to hard-liners, Yeltsin also fired prominent reformers Boris Nemtsov and Anatoly Chubais — the latter for the third time. Chubais was the government's chief negotiator with international lenders, obtaining a \$22.6 billion emergency bailout package that failed to stem the financial crisis. Both men are hated by the opposition for being the chief proponents of reform.

Russians, who have weathered one government crisis after another in recent years, were taking the latest one in stride, too. Although there were

lines outside some banks, there was no sign of food-hoarding or social unease.

Yeltsin's press service also reiterated Friday that the summit with U.S. President Bill Clinton in Moscow would go ahead as scheduled next week. Yeltsin discussed summit plans Friday with Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov and U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott.

Parliament's proposals would give lawmakers more say over Cabinet appointments and government policies. They would also offer certain guarantees — such as immunity from prosecution — if a president steps down. This provision has fuelled speculation that Yeltsin's resignation was imminent.

Chernomyrdin, who was fired in March, was brought back in a surprise move on Sunday as Yeltsin sought a more experienced leader to replace the youthful former Prime Minister Sergei Kiriyenko.

Kiriyenko warned Friday that Russia has yet to hit the bottom and full-blown chaos can't be ruled out.

"I don't want to talk about it because words have an unpleasant tendency to come true," he said. "For Russia it

[chaos] would be of an extreme type."

Chernomyrdin's return has failed to calm the markets, which continue to deteriorate.

All currency trades were suspended for a third day Friday, on orders from the Central Bank, effectively freezing the market through the weekend. The Central Bank lowered the official rate Friday to 7.905, or 12.7 cents, while the street rate remained below 10 rubles to the dollar.

The crisis has created a severe shortage of dollars both for banks and citizens. Banks, which must keep a certain percentage of their reserves in dollars, are hoarding them, and Russians who want to buy or withdraw them for safekeeping have been largely out of luck.

Russian stocks rebounded Friday from their dramatic fall earlier in the week, but traders cautioned that the move was exaggerated by the fact that volume has fallen to a trickle.

The Russian Trading System, Russia's largest stock exchange, was up 5.7 per cent at 66.77 points compared to Thursday's close of 63.2 points. Overall volume was less than \$2.2 million, and participants said the overall mood remained grim.

Israeli security services fear Jewish extremist attacks

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israeli security services have stepped up surveillance of Jewish extremists out of fear they may try to commit anti-Arab terrorist attacks, a security official told AFP Friday.

"We are taking very seriously the risk that Jewish extremists might commit acts to avenge the murder of settlers or to sabotage any possible accord with the Palestinians on a military pullback in the West Bank," the official said.

The chances of such acts is considered all the greater because settlers in the West Bank are armed and exasperation has been growing in their ranks in recent months.

But the official, who requested anonymity, said neither the police nor Israel's domestic intelligence service Shin Bet have information on any clandestine groups to carry out violence.

The British newsletter

Foreign Report said this week that an underground Jewish group was preparing "a series of assassinations of Arabs in the West Bank" and attacks on Jerusalem's Al Aqsa Mosque complex, Islam's third holiest shrine.

Israeli security officials worry that extremist individuals may carry out single attacks on Palestinians or try to attack Israeli officials who support a pullback from the West Bank, such as Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai.

Extremists sympathetic to the anti-Arab Kach Party, banned in 1994, have carried out a sit-in as "a sign of mourning" in recent days in front of Mordechai's house to mark the killing Aug. 20 of a settler rabbi in the West Bank town of Hebron.

Meanwhile, Israeli police arrested a Jewish settler after he fired his gun at homes in a Palestinian refugee camp north

of Hebron on Friday, a spokeswoman said.

The settler, whose identity was not given, opened fire at homes in the Al Aqsa refugee camp, damaging a water heater on the top of one house but causing no injuries, the police said.

Police detained the settler for questioning at his home in Kiryat Arba, located just outside the West Bank city of Hebron.

In the early 1980s, Shin Bet broke up a network which carried out several anti-Arab attacks and was planning to blow up Al Aqsa Mosque to block Israel's pullback from the Egyptian Sinai.

The Shin Bet has also dismantled other groups of lesser importance, but failed to stop a massacre of Muslims by settler Baruch Goldstein in Hebron in 1994, or the assassination of Labour Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995.

Hamas distances itself from Ben Laden

GAZA CITY (AP) — The founder of Hamas on Friday distanced his group from Saudi millionaire Osama Ben Ladeo, the suspected mastermind of bombing attacks on two U.S. embassies in East Africa earlier this month.

"Hamas has no connection to Ben Laden," Hamas founder Sheikh Ahmad Yassin told the Associated Press. "Ben Laden is one of the Muslim fighters against American aggression, but we have not met Ben Laden and he is not in our country."

Yassin was responding to reports that CIA agents have questioned six Hamas members imprisoned in Israel about their possible links to Ben Laden in recent days. The United States contends that Ben Laden runs a worldwide terrorist network from Afghanistan.

The Israeli daily Haaretz, citing information from the Hamas web site, said the prisoners were taken from their cells in Ashkelon in southern Israel to another lockup for questioning several days ago.

In response to the embassy bombings, the United States has bombed targets in Sudan and Afghanistan believed to be linked to Ben Laden.

Hamas has staged several rallies in recent days to protest the air strikes, but Yassin has been careful not to threaten the United States.

In his speeches, Yassin has reiterated that Hamas' only objective is to destroy Israel, and that there is no point in attacking U.S. targets.



REMBRANDT FOR SURE: 'Old Man with Turban,' an oil-on oak panel painting showing a shadowy portrait of an elderly man wearing a turban has been confirmed as the work of Dutch Master Rembrandt Van Rijn and will go on show publicly for the first time at an Amsterdam art fair. The privately owned painting has been the subject of speculation since it was first discovered in 1917. An Amsterdam-based research group has confirmed that it is by the Dutch master and not one of his followers (AP photo)

Palestinian-born bishop says he's no menace to anyone

By Stan Lehman
Associated Press Writer

SAO PAULO Bishop Pierre Moualem doesn't understand why people are afraid of him.

"I am dismayed that anyone should consider me a menace," said the Palestinian-born Moualem, who heads the Greek Melkite Catholic Church in Brazil. "I have dedicated my entire life to peace and ecumenism."

But when Pope John Paul II named him the new archbishop of the Galilee, the Israeli government was up in arms.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's spokesman, Aviv Bushinsky, charged that Moualem has links to Syrian intelligence and to Palestinian forces opposed to the Oslo peace accord.

Bushinsky said Israel considered denying him a visa but backed down when the Vatican protested. Still, he said, Israel hopes to persuade the Pope to reconsider the appointment.

Even Henry Sobel, a senior rabbi at Sao Paulo's Jewish

Congregation, said Moualem was a moderate clergyman who has "always worked for peace."

"Perhaps he is pro-Palestinian, but that doesn't mean he is anti-Israel," said Sobel, who is head of the World Jewish Council's inter-religious affairs department. "Favouring a Palestinian state, with the security of Israel guaranteed, is something with which many Jews can identify."

The grandson, son and nephew of Greek Catholic priests, Moualem was ordained in Lebanon in 1955. After several years there and in Israel, where most Christians belong to the Greek Catholic church, Moualem was sent to Brazil in 1990.

Here in South America's biggest city, Moualem is bishop for some one million parishioners, most of them descendants of Syrian and Lebanese immigrants.

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'Ginger Spice's' clothes to be auctioned for charity

LONDON (R) — "Ginger Spice" Geri Halliwell, the former Spice Girl, is selling the extravagant stage costumes she wore as a singer in the "girl-power" pop group. The clothes top the bill at Sotheby's "Rock o' Roll memorabilia" sale on September 16, the British auctioneers said. Among the glitzy costumes to come under the hammer will be an eye-catching "Union Jack" dress worn for the 1997 Brit Awards in London, which is expected to fetch up to \$19,800, Sotheby's said.

Paris police-squad fares well on rollerblades

PARIS (R) — Paris police headquarters said an experimental police unit equipped with rollerblades has been a big success and announced plans to expand the force. The initial unit of rollerbladers was organised in June to keep an eye on a new Paris happening — regular Friday night skating parties which have sent up to 5,000 skaters racing through the streets of the French capital. The force proved so popular that additional recruits were now being sought.

Crocodile needs fix

CARTAMA (AP) — Veterinarians in southern Spain plan to perform corrective surgery on a 4.7 metre crocodile that suffered a mangled leg in a fight with another crocodile. The 50-year-old male patient lives at Coochilles Park in Malaga province, the only marine park in Europe that breeds crocodiles. The 500-kilo reptile lost about half a metre of its tail and suffered severe cuts to one leg. Since the fight, a big clump of scar tissue has emerged right where the leg joins the body, making it hard for the animal to move the limb.

'Diana fatigue' hits England

LONDON (R) — Only six per cent of Britons are planning to observe the anniversary of Princess Diana's death next week amidst growing signs that so-called "Diana fatigue" is growing, according to a poll in the Daily Telegraph. More than two-thirds of people polled said marking the anniversary should be a matter of individual choice while 93 per cent said they were not planning any form of commemoration.

New addition to Lionel Richie's family

LOS ANGELES (AP) — It's a baby girl this time for Lionel Richie and his wife, Diane. Sofia Richie weighed in at 3.29 kilos, Richie publicist Monica Alexander said Wednesday. Sofia was born Monday at Cedars-Sinai Medical Centre. The couple have a son, Miles Brockman Richie, 4. The singer has a 16-year-old daughter, Nicole, from a previous marriage. Richie, an original member of The Commodores, is preparing for a tour and promoting his latest hit single, "Stay," from his album "Time."

President Rutherford invited for a holiday

FREMONT (AP) — Robin Leach is known for wooing the rich and famous. Now he's after a president who's been dead for more than a century. A notice offering a discounted Caribbean vacation arrived at the Rutherford B. Hayes Pre-idential Centre, addressed to none other than the 19th president. Dear Rutherford, Robin Leach says pack your bags, the letter says. "This is real and no mistake," it assures. "Please do respond promptly so that we may process you."

Sudanese rally behind government after U.S. missile attack

By Mohammad Ali Said
Agence France Presse

KHARTOUM — The people of Sudan, divided by 15 years of civil war, are uniting behind President Omar Al Bashir in condemning the U.S. missile attack on a pharmaceutical factory in Khartoum.

Bashir, facing a violent campaign to topple his Islamic-led government, has won widespread support from the public since the Aug. 20 raid, lambasted as an act of foreign aggression on Sudanese territory.

The Sudanese capital has been the scene of demonstrations and protest rallies in the eight days since the strike on

the Al Shiffa factory, which left one person dead and seven wounded.

Washington claims the plant was making components for chemical weapons — charges strongly denied by Khartoum.

Politicians and religious leaders have given voice to popular feeling with anti-U.S. speeches, while worshippers answered Bashir's call for a public day of prayers and fasting on Friday, praying for God to punish the U.S.

Opponents of Bashir's regime have also condemned the attack, although the exiled opposition backs up Washington's claims about the factory's activities.

"The reality is that this plant

was making components for chemical arms while pharmaceuticals were manufactured to cover up the main activity," said Mubarak Al Mahdi, secretary general of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), the opposition coalition.

But lawyer Ali Al Sayyid from the opposition Democratic Unionist Party blasted the raid as a "flagrant violation of Sudan's sovereignty [and] a barbaric act that cannot be accepted by any sensible person whatever justifications America has given."

Even in opposition, "we side with the government on national issues and reject foreign interference and violation of the nation's sanctity, despite

our disagreement with it," Sayyid said.

But nevertheless the government's foreign policy is "erroneous and is characterised by ambiguity and confusion that bring upon it an accusation of harbouring... terrorists," he said.

Washington, which accuses Sudan of being a state sponsor of terrorism, insists Al Shiffa had links to Saudi-born extremist Osama Ben Laden, whom it blames for the deadly August 7 embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania as well as a string of other anti-U.S. attacks.

But Khartoum says the plant manufactured pharmaceutical products exclusively and had

no connection with Ben Laden, who was expelled from Sudan in 1996 and now lives in Afghanistan.

Ghazi Suleiman, legal adviser to Al Shiffa's owner, backed government calls for an international fact-finding mission to examine the factory ruins to verify the U.S. allegations of chemical weapons production.

Suleiman leads an opposition lawyers organisation known as the National Alliance for Restoration of Democracy which defends activists on trial for anti-government activities.

He called on Bashir to capitalise on the country's unified position against the strike to restore "democratic legiti-

ty" including cancellation of "all freedom-binding" laws.

He also called for a constitutional conference, "in which all political forces are to participate, to spare the country from civil war and disintegration."

Since 1983, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), based in Sudan's mainly Christian and animist south, has been fighting the government to throw off the influence of the Arab, Islamic north.

Aid agencies estimate around 2.5 million people in the south now face starvation. Mahjub Urwah, publisher of the private Al Rai Al Aam newspaper, said the attack

could provide the focus of efforts for reconciliation between the government and the opposition.

"The entire Sudanese people have stood up with the nation and the state while the armed opposition has reversed its initial position and denounced the American aggression," he said in an editorial.

"Now that it has become clear that America targets all of Sudan, not only the existing regime, the opposition has to change its position," Urwah said, calling on the government to sit down with the opposition to tackle "the catastrophic situation" in the country.